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ABSTRACT

One of six staff development training manuals for career guidance infusion in the elementary school curriculum (K-6), this manual focuses on parent education and consultation. It is divided into the following seven major sections: (1) a list of the major goals and activities covered in the manual; (2) an overview chart displaying the goals, concepts, time, process, and instructional mode of each activity; (3) specific directions for each activity, including objectives, preparation requirements, and materials/equipment requirements; (4) leader's summaries presenting the background information needed to lead the activities; (5) participant worksheets and handouts; (6) participant summaries; and (7) a leader skills game board and cards. (See CE 018 130 for the project final report.) The three major goals covered by this manual are to understand the general purposes, physical aspects, and scope of parent education groups and resources; to understand the parent education program Systematic Training in Effective Parenting (STEP) and how to begin it; and to learn leadership techniques for facilitating the STEP program with parents (a leadership skills game is appended). Five other training manuals (CE 018 139-140 and CE 018 142-144) and a career guidance methods guide for grades K-6 (CE 018 137) are available. (BM)

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CE

Staff Development K-6

Comprehensive Career Guidance

PARENT EDUCATION and CONSULTATION

CE 018 141

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Staff Development

PARENT EDUCATION AND CONSULTATION

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PARENT EDUCATION AND CONSULTATION

GOALS

Goal 1 To understand the general purposes, the physical aspects, and the scope of parent education groups and resources.

Activity 1 - Leader presentation of an overview of parent education groups and resources

Activity 2 - Stimulus sentence recap

Goal 2 To understand a specific type of parent education group (Systematic Training in Effective Parenting) and how to begin that program.

Activity 1 - Leader overview of the STEP program

Activity 2 - Leader overview of two essential leadership qualities

Activity 3 - Leader overview of beginning a group

Activity 4 - "Selling" the idea.

Goal 3 To learn leadership techniques for facilitating the STEP program with parents.

Activity 1 - Looking at What Not to Do

Activity 2 - Looking at What to Do

Activity 3 - The Game Plan

Activity 4 - Putting It Together

OVERVIEW

Goal	Concepts	Activities	Time	Process	Mode
To understand the general purposes, the physical aspects and the scope of parent education groups and resources	Overview of parent education groups and resources	*leader overview of parent education groups and resources	20	discussing	large group
		*stimulus sentence recap	10	writing	independent
To understand a specific type of parent education group (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) and how to begin that program	Systematic training for Effective Parenting: beginning a group	*leader overview of the STEP program	10	discussing	large group
		*two essential leadership qualities	10	discussing	large group
		*beginning a group	15	discussing	large group
		*synthesizing by "selling" a parent on education group	45	role-playing	triads
To learn leadership techniques for facilitating the STEP program with parents	Effective leadership skills; synthesizing skills	*overview of effective leadership skills	30	discussing	large group
		*effective responses in specific situations	30	discussing	large group
		*synthesizing through a board game	60	playing a board game	small group
		*getting started	45	writing	independent

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS

ACTIVITY DIRECTION

Goal 1: To understand the general purposes, the physical aspects, and the scope of parent education groups and resources.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: Newsprint and felt pen and/or overhead projector, transparencies (optional), Participant Worksheet 1, Summary 1.

ARRANGEMENTS/PREPARATION: Arrange chairs in circle format.

Activity 1: "Overview of Parent Education Groups and Resources"

Objective: Participants will learn about the resources available for parent education programs.

Preparation: Have either newsprint or an overhead projector available to summarize main points.

Give a mini-lecture on the general purposes, the physical aspects, and the general scope of parent education materials. (See Leader's Summary #1.) Have participants refer to their handout summaries #1 after the material has been presented.

Activity 2: "Stimulus Sentence Recap"

Objective: Participants will list four initial responses to parent education groups.

Preparation: Ask participants to turn to P-worksheet #1 and to quickly, without judging or censoring themselves, fill in each sentence. Within a large group context, ask participants who are willing to share some of their responses.

Goal 2: To understand a specific type of parent education group (Systematic Training in Effective Parenting - STEP) and how to begin that program.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: newsprint and felt pen, Participant Worksheet 2, Participant Summaries 2, 3.

ARRANGEMENTS/PREPARATION: chairs that are moveable for small group role playing.

Activity 1: "Leader Overview of the STEP Program"

Objective: Participants will hear specific information regarding the STEP program.

Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the written material in the leaders summary of STEP as well as having had a thorough examination of the materials in the STEP kit. (Leader's Summary #2).

Go over the specific components of the STEP kit and the objectives of the program. Have participants refer to their handout summaries #2 after the material has been presented.

Activity 2: "Leader Overview of Two Essential Leadership Qualities"

Objective: Participants will learn two common misconceptions and personally assess their beliefs about them.

Preparation: Be familiar with the leaders summary #3 of two common misconceptions about parent education group leaders.

Present the two misconceptions as though they are true. For example, you might begin somewhat in the following manner:

> "There are two essential qualities that are absolutely necessary in being an effective STEP group leader. The first essential is that the leader be an authority on human behavior. After all, if a person is going to be truly effective, they need to be highly trained so he/she can be legitimately in control and in charge of the group. Secondly, an effective

leader should have all the rights answers. Nothing should take precedence over having the precisely correct answer!"

When the participants begin to take issue with your two "Basic Truths" (hopefully, they will!), switch over to the validity of (1) not having "authorities" as leaders and (2) not having all the right answers as though reading a recipe book. Ask for a show of hands who believed initially the "Basic Truths".

Activity 3: "Leader Overview of Beginning a Group"

Objective: Participants will learn specifics from a beginning session.

Preparation: Be familiar with the leader's summary of a beginning session (#4).

Summarize the main points on newsprint. Have participants refer to their handout summaries #3 after the material has been presented.

Activity 4: "Selling the Idea"

Objective: Participants will role-play "selling" the idea of parent educators to an administrator.

Preparation: Be familiar with the directions for switching roles from actor to responder to observer in participant worksheet #2.

Ask participants to form in groups of three. Tell them to look at their worksheet for the directions for role-playing. Go over the directions with the participants. After the groups have begun, let each role-playing go on for 5 minutes and the 3 minute format until all members have been the actor once.

Finish this exercise and the workshop with a synthesis of the salient "selling" points participants generated.

Goal 3: To learn leadership techniques for facilitating the STEP program with parents

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT: newsprint and felt pens, Participant Worksheets 3,4,5.

ARRANGEMENTS/PREPARATION: Have enough game boards and accompanying pieces for 4-5 players to each board

Activity 1: "Looking at What NOT to do"

Objective: Participants will learn specific behaviors to avoid for effectial leadership of parent education groups.

Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the ten games group members sometimes play. (Leader's Summary #5)

Ask participants to turn to their worksheet #3 on sabotage techniques. Go over each game with a brief discussion. Ask participants to mark the games they would have the most difficulty dealing with and the games they feel most comfortable handling.

Activity 2: "Looking at What to Do"

Objective: Participants will learn specific skills which facilitate effective leadership of classroom meetings.

Preparation: Be thoroughly familiar with the eight facilitative leadership techniques and specific responses in the leader's summary #6.

Ask participants to read their handout on the eight leadership skills. Ask them to mark the items according to the directions on their worksheet #4.

Discuss each skill separately. Tell the participants that they will be using this material as part of a game which is the next activity.

Activity 3: "The Game Plan"

Objective: Participants will synthesize information within the context of a simulation style game.

Preparation: Have enough game boards for 4 - 5 member participant groups. Check for the following game parts: 1 game board; markers for each player; 1 die; 15 CHANCE CARDS; 15 LEADER RESPONSE CARDS; 15 LEADER SKILLS CARDS: Game Directions; and the Handouts from the workshop.

Read the game directions and be familiar with the various situations and responses.

CAME DIRECTIONS

1. Roll the die - the player with the highest number is first, next highest number is second, and so on.

2. Each player rolls the die and moves around the game board.

3. The game is over when one player has passed FINISH or when the allotted time is over (the one closest to FINISH is the "winner")

4. There are four major drawing piles:

   *15 CHANCE CARDS - the player does what the card says, on the space where he has landed.

   *15 LEADER RESPONSE CARDS - the player reads the situation aloud and then moves forwards or backwards as the card directs.

   *15 SABOTAGE CARDS - the player reads the card aloud and answers the question. If he is correct, he gets to roll again.

   *15 LEADERS SKILLS CARDS - the player reads the situation aloud and then moves forwards or backwards as the card directs.

5. A player may draw from each pile only once during any one time.

See the leader's summary #7 of the content of the four drawing piles for greater familiarity with specific content.

Activity 4: "Putting it Together"

Objective: Participants will determine the feasibility and steps required to initiate a parent education program in their settings.

Preparation: Ask participants to complete the worksheet #5 for their particular situation. Discuss as a large group each of the five areas. Particularly emphasize how obstacles in #5 might be overcome.

LEADER'S SUMMARIES

Leader's Summary of Parent Education Groups #1

Purpose

Society is undergoing rapid social changes and recent movements toward social equality (women with men, children with adults) have presented challenges which most parents are not prepared to meet. Requests for assistance in improving interpersonal relations frequently come from parents who are frustrated in their attempts to raise children who are responsible, cooperative, and resourceful. Thus, a variety of materials have been created to aid parents in learning new methods of improving relationships with their children.

Philosophy

Requests can frequently be grouped and addressed in a study group. Such grouping is used with the assumption that the interpersonal problem grows out of a lack of information rather than illness or some psychic phenomenon. The group also assumes that there is considerable commonality in interpersonal problems and that there are resources available in the group, that group members help one another by sharing the burdens of ignorance and guilt as well as sharing ideas of alternative ways of perceiving and responding.

Physical Aspects

1. Location: The location of the meeting should be private and relatively quiet. Chairs should be comfortable; circular placement preferred (implies equal importance of all members, including the leader). Group members should be able to see each other's faces. If the room is fairly large, have the members sit in a circle closer together, rather than sitting "around" the room.

2. Time: The hour of the meeting, of course, is dictated by the schedules of the potential members and of the leader. It may be most convenient for mothers who do not work outside the home to attend meetings while their children are at school.

   Evening meetings are usually more convenient for fathers and mothers employed outside the home. In some areas study groups are conducted as part of the regular adult education program in the community.

   The matter of care for preschoolers and for your school-aged children during the group meetings can be decided on by the potential members. If the meetings are held during the day at the school, the older children in the building may be allowed to assist in the care of

preschoolers. If evening meetings are held, then the responsibility of providing child care can be dealt with by each individual family or by the collective group as a whole.

3. Length of a Session: The sessions should last 1¼ to 2½ hours, depending on the materials being used and the schedules of the potential members and of the leader.

4. Size of the Group: This depends again on what materials are being used. A group of approximately ten to twelve members usually allow for valuable participation and involvement.

5. Refreshments: These contribute to informality and should be considered if they do not add unnecessarily to the work of the leader. Often members will share responsibility for providing refreshments. Of course, refreshments should be only supplementary to the program and should not be used to turn the session into a social discussion.

Resource Materials

1. Books: Parents can use resource books such as Children the Challenge by Rudolf Dreikurs and the leader can use the accompanying Study Group Leaders Manual by Soltz. The Soltz leader's guide presents the characteristics of a group leader, characteristics of a group, ways of getting started, the outlines for the series of sessions and key questions for each chapter. Other parent study groups use Raising a Responsible Child by Dinkmeyer and McKay which includes a leader's outline, or The Practical Parent, ABC's of Child Discipline by Corsini and Painter. Yet another resource book that can be used for parenting groups is Gerald Patterson's Families. This book uses a programmed learning approach to teach parents about implementing behavior modification with their children.

2. Published Parenting Programs: At this writing the best structured materials for study group use in the opinion of the authors of this workshop is Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (Dinkmeyer and McKay, 1976). Patterned after the well received DUSO kit, the STEP kit contains a leader's manual, wall charts for each lesson, cassette tapes for each lesson, and a parent's handbook (text).

Leader's Summary of the STEP Program #2

Materials: The STEP kit was created by Don Dinkmeyer and Gary D. McKay and is published by the American Guidance Services, Inc. (Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014). The entire kit cost approximately $65.00 + tax (if applicable) + shipping costs. Additional parent handbooks to be used by group members are approximately $3.50 apiece + tax (if applicable) + shipping costs.

The following materials are included in a complete STEP kit: an introductory tape giving a description of the program and an invitation to parents; invitational brochures which describe the program for prospective participants; STEP Leader's Manual; one STEP Parent's Handbook; five tape cassettes (one or two recorded segments are presented in each STEP lesson); six discussion guide cards; nine posters that are spiral bound in a self-easle; ten charts; and a vinyl carrying case that is made to double as an easel for the charts.

Leader: A STEP parent education group can be led by a person trained in the helping professions. It can also be led by a lay person who is willing to study the leader's manual intensively and has the ability to lead discussion groups.

The leader's primary task is to create a learning environment so that parents can identify basic parent-child relationship principles, discuss techniques used in resolving problem situations, and acquire a sense of usefulness in helping others. The leader does not need to be consciously aware of the intended outcome for each separate act of attending or responding to the group member. Nevertheless, the leader should have the goals of the session in mind, be aware of the leader's facilitative role in a democratic group, and be consciously aware of strategies that may achieve the learning goals for study groups.

Length: The STEP program consists of nine lessons, with a homework activity at the end of each lesson. It is recommended that the STEP parent education group meet no more than once a week. This allows enough time to study the handbook and incorporate (by means of the homework assignments) what has been learned.

Objectives: The STEP program is based on fundamental Adlerian principles (as described by Dinkmeyer and McKay in Raising a Responsible Child) and the communication processes and skills of Thomas Gordon's Parent Effectiveness Training

The objectives of the STEP parent study groups are:

a. To help parents understand a practical theory of human behavior and its implications for parent-child relationships.

b. To help parents learn new procedures for establishing democratic relationships with their children.

c. To help parents improve communications between themselves and their children so all concerned feel they are being heard.

d. To help parents develop skills of listening, resolving conflicts, and exploring alternatives with their children.

e. To help parents learn how to use encouragement and logical consequences to modify their children's self-defeating motives and behaviors.

f. To help parents learn how to conduct family meetings.

g. To help parents become aware of their own self-defeating patterns and faulty convictions which keep them from being effective parents who enjoy their children.

Leaders Summary of Two Misconceptions About Parent Groups Leaders #3

Misconception #1: The parent group leader is an authority on human behavior.

Make clear to the members of your groups that you are not an authority on human behavior. Explain to the members that your job is to organize the group, present the program for each meeting, make the materials available, and lead the discussions so that all group members can participate profitably.

Of course you must prepare for each meeting by reading the Leader's Manual and the Parent's Handbook. It also helps to do some extra reading on the subject of raising children. But most important will be your ability to communicate - to help make the subject of each meeting meaningful to group members.

Misconception #2: The leader should be able to have all the "right" answers.

Shelves of books have been written on the subject of people helping other people. One discovery that has come from all this is that effective group leaders need not be authorities on the subject of "helping". Far more pertinent are their abilities to listen well and to facilitate communication among group members. If you believe that it's more important to be an effective listener and facilitator than it is to have a precisely correct answer, you will realize that you need not be competent in all aspects of child training in order to respond to questions.

Leader's Summary of Beginning a Study Group Session #4

The First Few Minutes:

A study group session may begin without leader intervention, usually in the form of casual conversation among members revolving around the behavior of children, experiences growing from the homework assignment, or issues growing out of reading assignments. If this occurs, there is a strong likelihood of two or more conversations occuring simultaneously and the leader feeling guilty about short circuiting meaningful dialogue to initiate a "lesson" that may be directly to the point. The leader can handle this dilemma by announcing "I'm really interested in the conversations that are going on. Perhaps we can all focus on (Person A) and will come back to (Person B) later." If necessary, repeat the essence of content or feeling to reinitiate discussion. Some possible repeat statements: "You sound really excited about your success." "You found that an action could have more than one goal and it was kind of hard to decide which."

Other Options:

The group may not start spontaneously. As the leader, you have several options for initiative at the beginning of a session. You may begin with homework or with the reading assignment. The homework assignment will tend to build continuity from one session to the next. It also gives members an opportunity to report success which is an encouraging experience.

An open lead to the discussion of homework might be: "What happened when you used encouragement?" This is an open ended question and most any outcome is possible. The open question will stimulate more discussion than a closed question, one that can be answered with a yes, no or one word explanation. A closed question carries with it implied messages of assumed incapability and guilt for a negative response. If the member reports a negative experience the leader can still be a winner by responding in terms of open ended statements of courage. "What can we learn from this?"

The pronoun "we" signals that the leader is an equal in the group and the focus of the group is on learning and mutual helpfulness.

Leader's Summary of Sabotage Techniques #5

A major problem for the leader and other participants is the group member who resists - knowingly or unknowingly what the rest of the group is trying to accomplish. Communicating honestly and directly is not easy. Accepting new ideas is no simple matter, either. When group members feel unsure of themselves, they may defend themselves by "playing games". The following are manipulative behaviors that have been classified in terms of games.

1. Monopoly - People who play "Monopoly" believe they must be the center of attention. They become concerned whenever they are not the focus of discussion. These people have a number of purposes for monopolizing the group. Aside from enjoying the attention of other members, they develop strategies for controlling and contesting the position of the leaders.

   To lessen the influence of the monopolizer, you might say "I'm getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this." Then move on.

   If the member continues trying to monopolize the group, ask him or her to drop membership. Suggest that the person consider individual parent counseling, where more time can be given.

2. Prove it - People who play this game challenge the leader, other members, the material, and anything else which to them symbolizes authority. They challenge in order to reveal the fallibility of the resources, to set themselves up as particularly intelligent, or to assume the leadership role.

   A leader needs to identify the purpose of this behavior and the beliefs that motivate it. If a member who plays this game is challenging mainly to be the center of discussion (if the person believes "I count only if other people are involved with me"), you need to find a way to encourage the person by recognizing assets and contributions. However, if the member is concerned with power and gaining a role of authority, you may need group assistance to redirect the person. Try asking the group, "What seems to be happening in the group now?" or, "How do you feel about what Joan is saying?" This will usually bring about a solution. If members offer feedback to the challenger and you move on to the next phase of the lesson, the problem is usually solved.

   If the person does not understand the confrontation of the other members, review the Discussion Guide Cards and clarify the meaning of effective communication. You might say, "These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them." In whatever course you choose, be sure to avoid a struggle for power.

3. Yakkity-Yak - Group members who talk incessantly may do so for recognition or because they believe their problems are more important than those of other group members. You can sometimes redirect chatterboxes by recognizing their enthusiasm and privately asking them to encourage more reserved members of the group to become involved in the discussion. To move the talker from chattering to putting principles into action, suggest that he or she apply a very specific principle for the following week.

   People whose talk in the group focuses only on themselves may be redirected with the question, "How does what you're saying relate to concerns expressed by (name)?" or "Could we go on and come back to this later if there is time?"

4. Try to Make Me - Group members who play this game have only a partial commitment to the program. Their motivation is superficial - they want something to give them magical control over their children. When the leader points out that they must be responsible for their own results, they show resistance.

   In some instances, the program's ideas may conflict with the resister's basic beliefs. If such a parent believes, "any questioning of my practices is a personal challenge," she or he will fight at every turn - either actively or passively.

   To a resister, you can say, "We cannot tell you what to do; you must decide what's best for yourself. Our purpose is to study the ideas set forth in this program, so we need to continue." Taking this stance, you imply that the resister is entitled to his or her beliefs, but not entitled to disrupt the purpose of the group.

   If the resisters can come to see that their personal opinions are not being threatened from the outside, they may eventually become more cooperative. In any event, by remaining objective you have demonstrated a way to deal with the invitation to a power struggle.

5. Have You Considered . . . Let's Look at All Points of View - Intellectualizers are similar to those who play "Try to Make Me". They resist with ideas, rather than with emotions. When the group is moving along, they enjoy interrupting its progress by bringing in a different point of view - often seemingly important.

   You can indicate that the person may have a point, but that the group is organized to consider and discuss the opinions and ideas presented in the group. Clarify that the leader's task is to help the group focus on what the program has to offer.

6. I'll Try It - One of the requirements of the STEP Program is that parents make consistent, firm commitments. If some parents begin to move toward action by stating, "I like the idea of (e.g., logical consequences for chores). I may try it." you need to use the "shock approach" and ask them firmly not to try it. Indicate that the word "try" implies a mere attempt, and if they fail, they can say, "Well, I tried." Ask them to either (1) change nothing, or (2) commit themselves to following a new course of action at least until the next session. Emphasize that one must begin a new approach with a firm decision. Remind them that expectations have much to do with success and failure.

7. Kids Will Do That. . . It 's Only Normal. . .It's Just a Stage One of the most common deterrents to group progress is the acceptance of all kinds of misbehavior and ineffective relationships as normal for parent-child relationships. People who promote this view believe that children are unavoidably "impossible to live with," hence only to be endured. They see no hope of helping children become cooperative, responsible, and enjoyable.

   If such a parent contributes very many gloomy pronouncements ("That's how kids are. . ."), you must block the attempts to reduce the group to futility. Confront their beliefs by stating, "You may feel it's impossible to improve relationships, but that has not been the experience of others. We are here because we believe we can change behavior and improve our relationships with children." Do not argue.

8. If Only He or She Would. - Some parents shift the responsibility for unsatisfactory parent-child relationships to a spouse, grandparent, neighbor, or some other person. In effect, such a parent is saying that a child's misbehavior is not influenced by the parent's own behavior, that someone else must act if things are to improve. When a leader reflects a position in the extreme ("You seem to be saying that nothing you say or do has any bearing on the relationship with your child"), the speaker can become aware of what he or she is really saying.

9. What Do You Do When. . . ? - The group will be likely to have a "catastrophizer", one who enjoys narrating details of calamities. This person tends to present very difficult problems and then resist suggestions for solutions, by pointing out, "But what if . . .?" The member who plays "What do you do when. . . ? usually has not experienced the object of his or her concern firsthand.

   The leader can ask, "Are you aware that when you say, "What if. . .?" it seems to me you are looking for reasons not to change what you're presently doing."

The leader can also turn the resister's question around by asking, "When the child did that, how did you respond?" Such redirection enables the group to look again at the purpose or consequence of the behavior. Continue by asking, "What principle did you overlook?" "Which principle could apply?" Do not permit the individuals to continue generalizing and intellectualizing. Require them to be specific.

Alternately the leader can respond, "Of course anything can happen; but let's work from our own concrete experiences."

10. Yes, But. . . Members who play this game are communicating to the rest of the group that they have no intention of accepting new ideas or making commitments. By saying, "Yes, but. . .," or words to that effect, they intend only to impress the group with their good intentions. They dare no risk stating yes or no.

The leader can confront vague or vacilating members with encouragement: "When you say, "Yes, but. . .," it sounds as if you're talking about something you really don't want to do. That's all right. It's not the purpose of this program to pressure you to do anything you don't want to do."

Or, refer the problem to the group: "What is George really saying?" If the group does not understand the meaning of George's message, express your own impressions.

The foregoing games occur because people are being asked to change before they have new skills and attitudes to replace the games. Through respect and patience, the leader can help parents learn more honest ways to express themselves in the group as well as with their children.

Leader's Summary of Facilitative Techniques for STEP Parent Group Leaders #6

The following skills of leadership can help each discussion be productive:

1. Structuring sets the purpose and goals of the group and the procedures of the meetings.

   The purpose of a STEP study group is to consider how principles of child behavior can be applied to specific situations. The study group does not have to become involved in extensive discussions of the beliefs and values of its members. Instead, the focus is on understanding basic principles and their application.

   Structuring establishes limits on discussions and redirects participants when they wander from the group's goals. Structuring requires the leader to be continuously aware of what is happening and to determine whether it is within the purposes of the group. The leader who structures well senses when it is appropriate to permit latitude in discussions and when it is prudent to draw boundaries.

   To prevent unnecessary confusion, the leader should obtain early consensus about the time and place and discuss materials to be used.

2. Universalizing is the process whereby a leader helps group members become aware that their questions and concerns are shared by others.

   If the members are to work together and to feel concern for each other, they must learn to listen to each other and discover that their concerns are not unique, but often common experiences.

   Group cohesion is promoted by a simple strategy: the leader's asking what others think about a presented problem.

   After hearing a question or a puzzled comment, you may ask, "Has anyone else wondered about that? Has anyone else had difficulty trying to. . .?" As responses come forth, listeners recognize they are not isolated in their lack of knowledge or in their ineffectiveness in influencing children's behavior.

3. Linking is the identification of common elements. It is a skill which requires a leader to listen carefully to the questions and comments expressed in the group.

As thoughts and feelings are expressed, listen for themes which are similar - but which may not have been recognized as such by other group members. Linking clarifies communication by helping members see that they have similar feelings or beliefs. Point out similarities or differences; for example, "Mary gets very discouraged when she tries to deal with Billy's ineptness. She seems to be saying, 'What's the use?' Do you remember Sue's son, Johnny, getting Sue to do things for him? Do you see any similarity between the two problems?"

As the common elements in their problems are pointed out, interaction between the members is promoted. Linking is an especially important technique in the early stages of a group or when members are not listening to each other.

4. Feedback is the process whereby a person gets reactions from members of the groupconcerning what he or she has just said or done. Feedback enables a person to understand how she or he is being perceived by others.

To build effective working relationships, group members must provide honest and specific feedback to each other. For the feedback process to work, group members must overcome some social taboos against the expression of thoughts and feelings.

The effective leader recognizes the value of feedback, points out its function in the group, and shows how it works by "feeding back" information to group members and clarifying what has happened. Feedback is most effective when it focuses on "here and now" situations which give members insight into how they act as parents. Saying to a member, "Your tone of voice and the way you appear to talk down to others comes across to me as disrespectful - could it be that your children are picking this up, too?" gives the person information about the messages he or she conveys. Feedback does not demand a mutual respect and caring. Any decision to change rests with the receiver.

5. Developing tentative hypotheses enables members to translate theory into practice by finding principles applicable to the behavior of their own children.

The STEP program assumes that all behavior - and misbehavior - is purposive. As questions about the application of this principle arise, the leader asks members to describe:

a. What, specifically, did the child do?
b. How did you feel when this was happening?
c. How did you respond to the misbehavior?
d. How did the child respond to your reaction?
e. What purpose did the child's misbehavior have for the child?

By taking them through these steps, the leader encourages parents to look for the purposes of behavior. It is important to encourage members to feel free to guess or use hunches. In time, members can come to recognize that the freedom to risk error and to be imperfect allows them to grow by accepting their own best efforts.

6. Focusing on the positive behavior of children and parents gives members encouragement and leads them to encourage each other.

   Ask: "What do you look forward to when you are with. . .?" Or, "What can this child be respected or valued for?" Although this may be a difficult task, helping members focus on the positive will improve their relationships with their children and their feelings about themselves.

   Recognize attempts by group members to function more effectively as parents. This will encourage at least minimal progress. Encouragement is a necessary skill for a parent; therefore, it should be practiced in the group. Members should learn to ask each other "What are some ways in which you can encourage your child?"

7. Task setting and obtaining commitments is the process whereby group members are helped to clarify tasks and to specify the time commitments they are willing to make. To progress beyond general discussion, individual members must establish tasks and make definite commitments.

   Task setting involves two steps: helping a parent identify a problem, and then helping him or her develop a specific procedure for solving it. Obtain a commitment by having the parent state an intention to apply the new procedure for a week and to report results at the next meeting of the group.

   The leader uses task setting and commitments to help each member focus clearly on what she or he wants to get from the study group. These procedures also align the goals of the individual with those of the group.

8. Summarizing helps members to understand ideas, procedures, and attitudes that have been expressed and to integrate what they have learned. The summary is verbal, not written, so all may benefit from the exchange.

   A summary may deal with the content of the meeting, the feelings of members, or with the level of their involvement. Group members can be asked to summarize at appropriate times. The leader needn't wait until the end of the session to help clarify how he or she and other group members see the group's progress.

At the end of a session, a summary may lead group members to become aware of important things they missed during the session. This type of learning often occurs when the leader invites each member to tell what he or she learned from the session. The simple question, "What did you learn this time?" not only enables the leader to clarify mistaken impressions, it improves the leader's understanding of the group as a whole.

Specific Effective Leader Responses

1. Silence: Silence is often an effective response. It is necessary to allow members time to think. Given such time, each member will be able to identify something learned from the experience of other members. A period of silence that seems like an eternity to the leader with "right" answers is in reality only about 30 seconds. Group members can be counted on to fill the void of silence. And their thoughtfulness will produce more learning than a dozen "right" answers.

2. The Repeat: "You tried to use encouragement but had a hard time finding the starting place." A repeat lets member know they are heard, gives them a chance to hear themselves, and gives an opportunity for correction if the leader has perceived incorrectly.

3. Pairing: If another member has previously reported a similar situation, "Your experience was similar to _____." or "Both you and _____ had trouble finding something to encourage." Misery does not love company but people do.

4. Respond to Content: The "repeat" above is a content response because it paraphrases what happened. This is more comforting than a response to feeling which will be illustrated later.

5. Expand: Given an opportunity more people will gladly tell you about their operation and in the process clarify the situation. "Can you tell us more about your Saturday morning?" "What did you try to do?"

   The member senses a genuine interest and the desire of others to be helpful. The leader may wish to build excitement either with the member or the entire group. The same situation presents the opportunity.

6. Action Responses: Once a basic relationship exists between the leader and the group as well as among group members, the leader may make action responses. The basic relationship means that a supportive atmosphere exists and the response will not be perceived as criticism or a put down. "What would you like to do about it?" "You've decided you're not going to put yourself in the same situation again."

7. Feeling Responses: Like action responses, feeling responses are more personal. To identify the feeling, think first in gross terms of pain and pleasure and then narrow to the more specific feeling. "You were really pretty discouraged at not being able to get something going." "Were you annoyed?" Again, a wrong guess enables you to improve your mark.

8. Ask for an Explanation: By comparison, why questions are more exciting than what, when, or where questions, but why questions demand an explanation. "Why couldn't you find one good thing that _____ was doing Saturday?" "Why did you wait until Saturday to try the encouragement?"

   Compare the feeling tone generated by the above questions with the more comforting "When did you start on Saturday?" "Where were you when you tried to use encouragement?" "Who was present?" In general, "why" questions are best avoided by the discussion group leader, but on occasion they may fit in with your goals.

Leader's Summary of Leader Skills - Game Cards #7

It is the first meeting of the parent education group and you are attempting to keep the discussion centered around "communication." However, Mrs. Car and Mrs. Lloyd are in the corner critisizing the school system; Mr. Lister, Mr. Car, and Mrs. Jay are discussing communication among themselves; and the rest of the members look bored. This meeting needs STRUCTURING!

GO BACK 3 SPACES

The parent education group is discussing children's responsibilities as they relate to school and getting homework accomplished. A few of the members begin to maneuver the discussion into a verbal attack on various teachers' methods and requirements. As the leader, however, you bring the conversation back to pinpointing what are the school responsibilities of children. Good STRUCTURING!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

It is the second parent group meeting and Mrs. Ross is expressing concern about her daughter's taking care of her own clothes. As the leader, you turn to the group and ask, "Has anyone else wondered or been concerned about that?" Other group members identify with the situation and begin to respond. Good UNIVERSALIZING!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Susan Lee is relating to the parent group about a situation she had to resolve with her son Michael. The result of the conflict left some questions in her mind about punishment. Immediately two other parents respond to her question with such comments as "The idea has been bothering me too" and "I had a similar experience with my Harry". They are UNIVERSALIZING themselves because of the pattern you established earlier in the group.

GO AHEAD 3 SPACES

Mr. Gomez is expressing frustration and annoyance about his five-year-old's consistant bid for attention. As the leader, you know that LINKING clarifies communication and is especially helpful in the early stages of the group - so you remark: "Last week didn't you express a similar problem of feeling irritated at your daughter's attention-getting methods, Mr. Rogers?"

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES!

Mrs. Lang is concluding an emotional description of how her Jackie has been so pokey in the mornings and she has had to drive him to school the past four days. All she receives is sympathetic (or embarrassed) mumblings. What this woman needs is FEEDBACK from the leader and other group members!

GO BACK 3 SPACES!

*Discuss in your group what could have been said to Mrs. Lang. Remember that FEEDBACK does not demand change - it only shares an observation.

The parent group members are verbally listing things they would like to see changed in their children. Mrs. Hall emphatically states that she is "sick and tired of constantly picking up Maggie's clothes from all over the house." Mrs. Day quietly remarks, "It sounds to me like your Maggie has discovered a good way of really getting you involved with her." You've done a good job teaching the members how to give FEEDBACK!

GO AHEAD 3 SPACES!

Mr. Poe came to the third parent group meeting eager to bring up his problem about Roger, his son: "I just can't get him to cooperate. Why is he like this?" To get Mr. Poe to begin to apply newly learned theories to a specific situation, you lead him through a series of questions: what specifically happened, how did it make you feel, what did you do, then what happened, and so on. You are helping Mr. Poe in DEVELOPING TENTATIVE HYPOTHESES!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES!

Mrs. Smith excitedly reports to your parent education group tonight about how she successfully handled her daughter's bid for negative attention during the past week. You have helped her in DEVELOPING TENTATIVE HYPOTHESES and in risking applying those hypothesis.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Mr. John is describing how he attempted to respond to his children's fighting: he went to his room to read; however, when they followed him with their fighting, he ended up spanking them both. All you are able to concentrate on is his adding to a power struggle with punishment. As the leader, you should encourage him (he did remove himself from the situation as a first step) and try FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVE.

GO BACK 2 SPACES

The assignment tonight for the parents in your group is to describe what they like about their children - what actions they can encourage. As the leader, you know how important it is to try FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Mr. Fox often complains in the parent group about his son's lack of responsibility-taking at home. Yet, when you try to get him to pinpoint specific situations and apply the theories he has learned, he simply replies, "I'll try" (without any real enthusiasm). You feel discouraged because you know that TASK SETTING AND OBTAINING COMMITMENTS are important parts of the learning process.

GO BACK 1 SPACE

Your parent education group has been meeting for several weeks now and the enthusiasm and involvement are showing a definite increase. As the leader, you have established the pattern of a weekly homework assignment (to apply techniques learned during the meeting) and the parents report about their experiences at the following meeting. Good TASK SETTING AND OBTAINING COMMITMENTS!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

The third meeting of your parent education group is over and two of the parents have come up to you and expressed dissatisfaction with the process of the group. You have also been concerned about the group's involvement. You leave the meeting frustrated and a bit discouraged. SUMMARIZING during the meeting would have helped to clarify feelings and mistaken impressions.

GO BACK 1 SPACE

You and the parent education group you are leading are in the middle of the second meeting. The discussion seems to be flourishing. Various members seem to want to skirt the subject instead of talking about the real issues at hand. You stop the discussion for a minute and ask such questions as: "What is happening to our group, how are you feeling right now, what are we wanting to accomplish during this session?". Good use of SUMMARIZING!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Leader's Summary of Leader Response Game Cards #7

You are leading your second parent group meeting, and you still feel a bit nervous. Mrs. Rogers has just described a problem she has had with her son and has asked, "What should I have done?" The "right" answer seems obvious to you, yet none of the other parents volunteer a solution. So, to keep things moving, you suggest your "right" answer. In this case, SILENCE would have been an effective response. Thirty seconds may seem like an eternity to you, but it would have allowed others to get up the courage to speak out.

GO BACK 1 SPACE

Mrs. Wong has just posed a question about one of the theories presented in the parent education group readings. You decide to use SILENCE as a response for Mrs. Wong. After a short while, Mr. Poe, who usually has a difficult time speaking before the others, begins to explain his viewpoint concerning the theory in question. Good leader response!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES!

This is the seventh parent group meeting, and the members are very interested in having an opportunity to receive help with their personal situations. However, as leader you have been giving several examples from your own experiences to teach specific points. This extensive use of CONCRETENESS responses by the leader is unwise. CONCRETENESS should be used sparingly by the leader in the later group sessions.

GO BACK 1 SPACE

It is the first parent education meeting, and you are teaching the goals of misbehavior. The parents are not becoming involved in the discussion very easily. To illustrate your teaching point and to get the discussion going, you begin to describe a personal illustration of your son's attention-getting methods at yesterday's church meeting. This is a good use of CONCRETENESS in response to the tension of the group.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES!

The REPEAT RESPONSE: Mr. and Mrs. Howe have been reluctant to get involved in the parent group discussions. Tonight, however, they timidly tell of a problem situation they were having with their son: "We just don't know quite what to do with Randy. He's always acting up at meals and disrupting the whole family." You want them to feel understood and comfortable in sharing. So you repeat the basic content: "You would like

Randy to have more responsible actions, but you're having a hard time knowing how and where to start."

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE!

Mrs. Garcia is attempting to describe her Anna's ability to disrupt the entire household at bedtime. You respond: "I remember from last week that Mr. Lee was describing a similar problem. Both of you seem to be having trouble finding a way to get your children to cooperate at bedtime." This was a good PAIRING response for you to make.

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE!

The parents are reporting about their experiences this past week in using natural and logical consequences with their children. The Harlows have described how their Sandy was shocked when her parents did not step in and take over when she missed the bus last Tuesday. She ended up having to walk to school. Later the Smiths related about the incident when their John missed supper because he did not come home when called; he was amazed at his parents (and angry) that he had to experience hunger until the next morning. You decide to give a PAIRING response: "Both you and the Harlows had similar experiences. Your children were astounded that they needed to suffer consequences for the decisions they made."

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE!

This is the first parent education group meeting, and the parents seem obviously ill at ease. You have decided that you want to establish a comfortable atmosphere for them to share in, so you direct most of your remarks about their situations to RESPONDING TO CONTENT. For example, Mrs. Castor described how her small son runs away from her in the shopping center and throws a temper tantrum when she catches up to him. You reacted with, "You would like to help your son learn better public manners, yet you aren't sure how to start?"

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE!

Mrs. Walker is trying to enlist the help of the group members in learning how to change her daughter's extreme attention-getting behavior while Mrs. Walker is on the telephone. The group has met several times together now, and you would like to build a little more excitement in the group. So you ask Mrs. Walker, "Tell us more about what your daughter is doing. What do you do while she is acting this way?" Good use of an EXPAND RESPONSE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES!

Ever since the parent group began meeting, Mr. Roberts has been reluctant to speak out or describe his family situation. Tonight at the meeting he is quietly relating how his son refused to help with the family chores. You are excited about Mr. Roberts' contribution, so you ask him more: "How did he refuse? What did you do then?" It would probably be better not to use the EXPAND RESPONSE here (Mr. Roberts could feel pressured). A response relating just to the content would build more comfort in his situation.

GO BACK 1 SPACE!

Your parent education group has been meeting for quite a while now, and it has become a close, supportive group. Mr. Carr has brought up a problem they are having with their daughter Lynn. You give an ACTION RESPONSE: "What would you like to do about it, Mr. Carr?" This launches Mr. Carr and the group into generating a plan on how to handle the situation.

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE!

This is the first meeting of the parent education group. A few of the parents have begun to share about some of their problem experiences with children. When Mr. Sells finishes, you try to get onto the topic of "parent reactions" by asking, "What do you think you should do about it?" It would be better this early in the group's experiences not to give such an ACTION RESPONSE. Since support within the group has not developed yet, this type of response might be seen as a "put-down".

GO BACK 1 SPACE!

Mrs. Lang came to the meeting noticeably upset. She explained to the members that right before she left the house, her son had shouted that she should stay home and help him with homework, and that if she didn't care about him then he didn't love her either. You quietly remarked, "You must have felt hurt at his reaction to your coming to the meeting tonight." Good FEELING RESPONSE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES!

Your parent education group has been meeting for several months now. The parents are discussing developing confidence in their new-found parenting techniques. Mrs. Jones describes an incident where her mother-in-law took issue with one of her parenting methods in front of her son. You remark, "You must have felt pretty frustrated and put down about then." Good FEELING RESPONSE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES!

Mrs. Hall is describing her son's "allergy" to homework and how she has to keep after him to get it done. You respond: "Why did you decide that homework was your responsibility and not his?" This ASK-FOR-AN-EXPLANATION-RESPONSE (the why question) is usually to be avoided by the group leader. It is often too confrontive for the parent. Rarely - in extreme cases - would this type of response fit in with your goals.

GO BACK 1 SPACE!

Leader's Summary of Chance Statements - Game Cards #7

Smile at the members of your group.

What is your favorite food? - Why?

Give an I-message to someone in your group.

Tell someone in your group what you like about him or her.

Describe how you feel right at this moment.

Tell about a favorite toy you had as a child.

If you could change the world, what one thing would you change? - Why?

Describe the "ideal" student - use only four adjectives.

What is your favorite color? - Why?

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? - Why

What is your favorite T.V. show? - Why?

What one thing do you enjoy most about your job?

What one thing do you like least about your job?

If you could change into any animal, what would you become? - Why?

What have you done this past week to help someone? Tell the group about it.

Leader's Summary of Sabotage Game Cards #7

Mr. Sands is quickly becoming a problem for your parents education group. He wants to be the center of attention and dominate the discussions. He is playing the sabotage game of MONOPOLY. What might you say to Mr. Sands?

If you said something like:

"I am getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this."

or

"When you keep us busy with you, I can't help group members get involved with each other."

or

"It's very hard for me to give you my undivided attention when I have so many group members to consider and include."

ROLL AGAIN!

Several times now Mr. Harlow has taken issue with the ideas presented in the discussion of the parent education materials: "I'd like them to just come and show me how that would possibly work! My Susan never acts that way. . ." She is playing the sabotage game called PROVE IT. What might you say to Mrs. Harlow?

If you said something like:

"I am getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this."

or

"When you keep us busy with you, I can't help group members get involved with each other."

or

"These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them."

or

"You may have a point and I am glad that you saw that point but we are here to consider and discuss the ideas and opinions presented in the program."

or

"It's up to you to decide if these ideas and beliefs are of value to you and your situation. If you consider these ideas and beliefs are of no value to you, you might be happier and more at ease if you consider dropping from the group."

or

"We cannot tell you what to do, you must decide what is best for yourself. Our purpose is to discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program."

ROLL AGAIN!

Mrs. Car is enthusiastic about the parent education group. However, she seems to talk incessantly about her own home situations. She chatters through the whole meeting and you know it is inhibiting the participation of the other members. She is playing the sabotage game of YAKKITY-YAK. What could you say to Mrs. Car?

If you said something like:

"I am getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this."

or

"When you keep us busy with you, I can't help group members get involved with each other."

or

"It's hard for me to give you my undivided attention when I have so many other group members to consider and include."

ROLL AGAIN!

Mr. Shaw is playing the sabotage game TRY TO MAKE ME. He has taken issue with several of the techniques presented in the parent education

materials because they "conflict with my authority as Sam's father - I know what's best for him and what I say, goes!" What could you say to Mr. Shaw?

If you said something like:
"These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them."

or

"You may have a point and I'm glad to understand how you feel about parental responsibility, but we are here to consider and discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program."

or

"It's up to you to decide if these ideas and beliefs are of value to you and your situation. If you consider these ideas and beliefs are of no value to you, you might be happier and more at ease if you consider dropping the group."

or

"You feel it's impossible to improve relationships, but that has not been the experience of others. We are here because we believe we can change behavior and improve our relationships with children."

ROLL AGAIN!

Mr. Carpenter seems to enjoy playing the sabotage game HAVE YOU CONSIDERED. . .LET'S LOOK AT ALL POINTS OF VIEW. He has tried to read several authors' works on the subject of parenting. Several times he has interrupted the progress of the group and resisted ideas by quoting diverse authors. What could you say to Mr. Carpenter?

If you said something like:
"These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them."

or

"You may have a point and I am glad you saw the relationship but we are here to consider and discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program."

or

"It's up to you to decide if these ideas and beliefs are of value to you and your situation. If you consider these ideas and beliefs are of no value to you, you might be happier and more at ease if you consider dropping from the group."

or

"We cannot tell you what to do, you must decide what is best for yourself. Our purpose is to discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program."

or

"It seems that there are a lot of things that we can do to improve our relationships with our children."

ROLL AGAIN!

Another type of sabotage game that can inhibit progress is I'll TRY IT. Your parent education group has met several times together now. The topic of discussion tonight is "I-messages." Mrs. Lee is impressed with this type of communication and she remarks, "I like that idea, I may try it with my Sarah." How could you respond to Mrs. Lee?

If you said something like:

"I feel that it's best to either change nothing or to commit yourself to following an entirely new course of action at least until the next session."

or

"It's usually best when starting a new course of action to begin with a firm resolve to proceed by a direct role and goal in mind. Remember that your expectations of success or failure has an influence on the outcome of your actions."

ROLL AGAIN!

When Mrs. Harris wants to contribute a personal experience to the parents group's discussion, she usually concludes her remarks with: "That Sammy really can be frustrating! I figure it's just a stage, though, and he will grow out of it eventually." This is the sabotage game called KIDS WILL DO THAT . . . IT'S ONLY NORMAL . . .IT'S JUST A STAGE. How could you respond to Mrs. Harris?

If you said something like:

"You feel it's impossible to improve relationships, but that has not been the experience of others. We are here because we believe we can change behavior and improve our relationships with children."

or

"At times children do appear to behave in the same manner in their development, but I wonder how much of this is contributed by our behavior towards children."

or

"You seem to be saying that nothing you say or do has any bearing on the relationship with your child."

ROLL AGAIN!

Mrs. Trass attends the parent education group alone because her husband has a meeting each night the group meets. In fact, his job requires him to be away from home a large amount of time. When describing personal situations in the group discussions, Mrs. Trass often gets caught in the sabotage game IF ONLY HE OR SHE WOULD. She shifts the responsibility for the parent-child problems onto the absent husband. What might you say to Mrs. Trass?

If you said something like:

"You seem to be saying that nothing you say or do has any bearing on the relationship with your child."

or

"We are learning in this program what each individual can do, not what others should do."

or

"If we assume responsibility for our own behavior, then we are free to decide what to do about it."

ROLL AGAIN!

After a few parent group meetings, it is apparent that Mrs. Jones enjoys being the "catastrophizer" in each session. When a new technique is being discussed, she will usually pick at it with such questions as "But what do you do when _____ happens?" and "But what if _____ doesn't react that way?" The discussion really gets bogged down when Mrs. Jones begins her hypothetical situations. She is using the sabotage game 'WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN . . .? What could you say to Mrs. Jones?

If you said something like:

"Are you aware that when you say "What if . . .?" it seems that you are looking for reasons not to change what you are presently doing?'

or

"When the child did that, what did you do?' (This forces the parent to either concentrate on specifics or to face up to the hypothetical situation.)

or

"What principle did you overlook? Which principle could you have applied?"

or

"Of course anything can happen; but let's work from our own experiences."

ROLL AGAIN!

As the parent education group leader, you have noticed that Mr. Lowe seems reluctant to risk saying yes or no when members ask his opinion or when the group attempts to help him develop a "plan for action." Instead of being definite, he plays the sabotage game of YES, BUT . . . How could you respond to Mr. Lowe?

If you said something like:

"When you say "Yes, but. . ." it sounds as if you are talking about something you really don't want to do. That's all right. It's not the purpose of this program to pressure you to do anything you don't

want to do."

or

(Addressed to the entire group) "What is Mr. Lowe really saying to us?"

ROLL AGAIN!

Why do members of parent groups play sabotage games?

If you said something like:
They have not learned to communicate honestly and directly.

or

They are being asked to change before they have new skills and attitudes to replace the sabotage games.

or

They feel unsure of themselves and use the sabotage games to defend themselves.

ROLL AGAIN!

There are usually four major steps in trying to deal with a person who plays a consistent and disruptive sabotage game: (1) you respond by referring to the content of his statements; (2) you let the group discuss "what is happening now" or "what is really being said here"; (3) you disclose here-and-now-type feelings; and (4) you talk with the individual outside of the group setting. You have such an individual in your parent education group and you have reached step #4. What kinds of things might you say to this individual?

If you said something like:
The leader could suggest that the individual make a contribution to the group (i.e. helping someone else speak out more).

or

The leader could confront the individual about his purposes in the form of an I-message.

or

The leader could recommend other resources where the individual might obtain additional help.

or

The leader might suggest that the individual drop out of the group.

ROLL AGAIN!

This is Arthur Jensen's first attempt at leading a parent education group. He has prepared for the course well and feels relatively self-confident. During the meeting, however, many of the parents seek solutions to personal parenting problems and Mr. Jensen unwittingly falls into the trap of giving suggestions and "possible" answers. If not careful, Mr. Jensen will soon be sabotaging his entire parent education course. How is Mr. Jensen sabotaging the success of the group?

If you said something like:

Mr. Jensen is letting the group members look upon him as an authority on human behavior.

ROLL AGAIN!

Maude Lister has begun leading her first parent education group. This is the second meeting and a similar pattern is beginning to repeat itself: when the parents hesitate to respond to Maude or discuss the lesson, then she supplies them right away with the "answers." Ms. Lister will soon be sabotaging her entire parent education group. How is she sabotaging the success of the group?

If you said something like:

She is more concerned with giving the right answer than she is with understanding and using communications skills.

ROLL AGAIN!

There are ten major sabotage games that defensive parents might try to "play". Without looking at your hand-out, list and describe four of the sabotage games.

If you describe four of the sabotage games.

1. Monopoly
2. Prove It
3. Yakkity-Yak
4. Try to Make Me
5. Have You Considered . . . Let's Look at All Points of View . . .
6. I'll Try It
7. Kids Will Do That . . . It's Only Normal . . . It's Just a Stage
8. If Only He or She Would . . .
9. What Do You Do When . . . ?
10. Yes, But . . .

ROLL AGAIN!

PARTICIPANT WORKSHEETS

Objective: To summarize information on parent education.

Activity: 10 minutes

PARENT EDUCATION RECAP

TASK DIRECTIONS

Often what a person first recalls about a newly learned concept or idea is very important. As you look at the following four stimulus sentences, tap in on your first thought or association in finishing up each sentence.

1. In parent education meetings, the group _____

   _____.

2. Parent education helps _____

   _____.

3. Several parent education programs focus on _____

   _____.

4. The idea of parent education seems _____

   _____.

Objective: To role-play "selling" parent education groups to an administrator.

Activity:

"PUTTING IT TOGETHER"

TASK DIRECTIONS

You have been involved in learning about parent education groups, their purposes and specific skills in leading them. This activity is a practice time for promoting their value and emphasizing aspects of the program in a role-playing situation. There will be 3 roles for each member of your group to play.

Actor: teacher or counselor who wants to begin a parent education group.

Responder: principal who isn't sure about the amount of time involved and is in general skeptical.

Observer: give feedback to the actor about his/her salesmanship and what points were particularly potent. (The responder can give feedback about potent points too.)

1. Each person become A, B, C.

2. For the first round
   A = Actor
   B = Responder
   C = Observer

3. Role-play the situation for 5 minutes.

4. Give feedback to each other for about 3 minutes.

5. Switch roles
   B = Actor
   C = Responder
   A = Observer

6. Go through the role-playing and feedback process as before.

7. Switch roles
   C = Actor
   A = Responder
   B = Observer

Objective: To learn specific games which can sabotage parent education groups.

SABOTAGE GAMES

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read first and then discuss with the other workshop participants the following techniques. Put an X by the games you feel would be hardest to deal with. Put an O by those games you feel comfortable handling.

A major problem for the leader and other participants is the group member who resists - knowingly or unknowingly-what the rest of the group is trying to accomplish. Communicating honestly and directly is not easy. Accepting new ideas is no simple matter, either. When group members feel unsure of themselves, they may defend themselves by "playing games". The following are manipulative behaviors that have been classified in terms of games.

__ __ 1. Monopoly - People who play "Monopoly" believe they must be the center of attention. They become concerned whenever they are not the focus of discussion. These people have a number of purposes for monopolizing the group. Aside from enjoying the attention of other members, they develop strategies for controlling and contesting the position of the leaders.

To lessen the influence of the monopolizer, you might say "I'm getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this." Then move on.

If the member continues trying to monopolize the group, ask him or her to drop membership. Suggest that the person consider individual parent counseling, where more time can be given.

__ __ 2. Prove it - People who play this game challenge the leader, other members, the material, and anything else which to them symbolizes authority. They challenge in order to reveal the fallibility of the resources, to set themselves as particularly intelligent, or to assume the leadership role.

A leader needs to identify the purpose of this behavior and the beliefs that motivate it. If a member who plays this game

is challenging mainly to be the center of discussion (if the person believes "I count only if other people are involved with me") you need to find a way to encourage the person by recognizing assets and contributions. However, if the member is concerned with power and gaining a role of authority, you may need group assistance to redirect the person. Try asking the group, "What seems to be happening in the group now?" or, "How do you feel about what Joan is saying?" This will usually bring about a solution. If members offer feedback to the challenger and you move on to the next phase of the lesson, the problem is usually solved.

If the person does not understand the confrontation of the other members, review the Discussion Guide Cards and clarify the meaning of effective communication. You might say, "These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them." In whatever course you choose, be sure to avoid a struggle for power.

__ __ 3. Yakkity-Yak - Group members who talk incessantly may do so for recognition or because they believe their problems are more important than those of other group members. You can sometimes redirect chatterboxes by recognizing their enthusiasm and privately asking them to encourage more reserved members of the group to become involved in the discussion. To move the talker from chattering to putting principles into action, suggest that he or she apply a very specific principle for the following week.

People whose talk in the group focuses only on themselves may be redirected with the question, "How does what you're saying relate to concerns expressed by (name)?" or "Could we go on and come back to this later if there is time?"

__ __ 4. Try to Make Me - Group members who play this game have only a partial commitment to the program. Their motivation is superficial - they want something to give them magical control over their children. When the leader points out that they must be responsible for their own results, they show resistance.

In some instances, the program's ideas may conflict with the resister's basic beliefs. If such a parent believes, "any questioning of my practices is a personal challenge," she or he will fight at every turn - either actively or passively.

To a resister, you can say, "We cannot tell you what to do; you must decide what's best for yourself. Our purpose is to study the ideas set forth in this program, so we need to continue." Taking this stance, you imply that the resister is entitled to his or her beliefs, but not entitled to disrupt the purpose of the group.

If the resisters can come to see that their personal opinions are not being threatened from the outside, they may eventually become more cooperative. In any event, by remaining objective you have demonstrated a way to deal with the invitation to a power struggle.

__ __ 5. Have You Considered . . . Let's Look at All Points of View - Intellectualizers are similar to those who play "Try to Make Me". They resist with ideas, rather than with emotions. When the group is moving along, they enjoy interrupting its progress by bringing in a different poin^ of view - often seemingly important.

You can indicate that the person may have a point, but that the group is organized to consider and discuss the opinions and ideas presented in the group. Clarify that the leader's task is to help the group focus on what the program has to offer.

__ __ 6. I'll Try It - One of the requirements of the STEP Program is that parents make consistent, firm commitments. If some parents begin to move toward action by stating, "I like the idea of (e.g., logical consequences for chores). I may try it." you need to use the "shock approach" and ask them firmly not to try it. Indicate that the word "try" implies a mere attempt, and if they fail, they can say, "Well, I tried." Ask them to either (1) change nothing, or (2) commit themselves to following a new course of action at least until the next session. Emphasize that one must begin a new approach with a firm decision. Remind them that expectations have much to do with success and failure.

__ __ 7. Kids Will Do That. . . It's Only Normal. . .It's Just a Stage. One of the most common deterrents to group progress is the acceptance of all kinds of misbehavior and ineffective relationships as normal for parent-child relationships. People who promote this view believe that children are unavoidably "impossible to live with," hence only to be endured. They see no hope of helping children become cooperative, responsible, and enjoyable.

If such a parent contributes very many gloomy pronouncements ("That's how kids are. . ."), you must block the attempts to reduce the group to futility. Confront their beliefs by stating, "You may feel it's impossible to improve relationships, but that has not been the experience of others. We are here because we believe we can change behavior and improve our relationships with children." Do not argue.

__ __ 8. If Only He or She Would. - Some parents shift the responsibility for unsatisfactory parent-child relationships to a spouse, grandparent, neighbor, or some other person. In effect, such a parent is saying that a child's misbehavior is not influenced

by the parent's own behavior, that someone else must act if things are to improve. When a leader reflects a position in the extreme ("You seem to be saying that nothing you say or do has any bearing on the relationship with your child"), the speaker can become aware of what he or she is really saying.

__ __ 9. What Do You Do When. . . ? - The group will be likely to have a "catastrophizer", one who enjoys narrating details of calamities. This person tends to present very difficult problems and then resist suggestions for solutions, by pointing out, "But what if . . .?" The member who plays "What do you do when. . .? usually has not experienced the object of his or her concern firsthand.

The leader can ask, "Are you aware that when you say, "What if. . .?" it seems to me you are looking for reasons not to change what you're doing.".

The leader can also turn the resister's question around by asking, "When the child did that, how did you respond?" Such redirection enables the group to look again at the purpose or consequence of the behavior. Continue by asking,"What principle did you everlook?" "Which principle could apply?" Do not permit the individuals to continue generalizing and intellectualizing. Require them to be specific.

Alternately the leader can respond, "Of course anything can happen; but let's work from our own concrete experiences."

__ __10. Yes, But. . .Members who play this game are communicating to the rest of the group that they have no intention of accepting new ideas or making commitments. By saying, "Yes, but. . .," or words to that effect, they intend only to impress the group with their good intentions. They dare no risk stating yes or no.

The leader can confront vague or vacilating members with encouragement: "When you say, "Yes, but. . .," it sounds as if you're talking about something you really don't want to do. That's all right. It's not the purpose of this program to pressure you to do anything you don't want to do."

Or, refer the problem to the group: "What is George really saying?" If the group does not understand the meaning of George's message, express your own impressions.

The foregoing games occur because people are being asked to change before they have new skills and attitudes to replace the games. Through respect and patience, the leader can help parents learn more honest ways to express themselves in the group as well as with their children.

Objective: To learn specific facilitative leadership techniques for parent education groups.

FACILITATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR LEADERS AND SPECIFIC RESPONSES

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read first and then discuss with the other workshop participants the following facilitative skills. Put an X by the skills you feel you already have developed and put an O by those you believe need to be learned or need more practice.

The following skills of leadership can help each discussion be productive:

__ __ 1. Structuring sets the purpose and goals of the group and the procedures of the meetings.

The purpose of a STEP study group is to consider how principles of child behavior can be applied to specific situations. The study group does not have to become involved in extensive discussions of the beliefs and values of its members. Instead, the focus is on understanding basic principles and their application.

Structuring establishes limits on discussions and redirects participants when they wander from the group's goals. Structuring requires the leader to be continuously aware of what is happening and to determine whether it is within the purposes of the group. The leader who structures well senses when it is appropriate to permit latitude in discussions and when it is prudent to draw boundaries.

To prevent unnecessary confusion, the leader should obtain early consensus about the time and place and discuss materials to be used.

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__ __ 2. Universalizing is the process whereby a leader helps group

members become aware that their questions and concerns are shared by others.

If the members are to work together and to feel concern for each other, they must learn to listen to each other and discover that their concerns are not unique, but often common experiences.

Group cohesion is promoted by a simple strategy: the leader's asking what others think about a presented problem.

After hearing a question or a puzzled comment, you may ask, "Has anyone else wondered about that? Has anyone else had difficulty trying to. . .?" As responses come forth, listeners recognize they are not isolated in their lack of knowledge or in their ineffectiveness in influencing children's behavior.

__ __ 3. Linking is the identification of common elements. It is a skill which requires a leader to listen carefully to the questions and comments expressed in the group.

As thoughts and feelings are expressed, listen for themes which are similar - but which may not have been recognized as such by other group members. Linking clarifies communication by helping members see that they have similar feelings or beliefs. Point out similarities or differences: for example, "Mary gets very discouraged when she tries to deal with Billy's ineptness. She seems to be saying, 'What's the use?' Do you remember Sue's son, Johnny, getting Sue to do things for him? Do you see any similarity between the two problems?"

As the common elements in their problems are pointed out, interaction between the members is promoted. Linking is an especially important technique in the early stages of a group or when members are not listening to each other.

__ __ 4. Feedback is the process whereby a person gets reactions from members of the group concerning what he or she has just said or done. Feedback enables a person to understand how she or he is being perceived by others.

To build effective working relationships, group members must provide honest and specific feedback to each other. For the feedback process to work, group members must overcome some social taboos against the expression of thoughts and feelings.

The effective leader recognizes the value of feedback, points out the function in the group, and shows how it works by "feeding back" information to group members and clarifying what has happened. Feedback is most effective when it focuses on "here and now" situations which give members insight into how they act as parents. Saying to a member, "Your tone of voice and the way you appear to talk down to others

comes across to me as disrespectful - could it be that your children are picking this up, too?" gives the person information about the messages he or she conveys. Feedback does not demand a mutual respect and caring. Any decision to change rests with the receiver.

__ __ 5. Developing tentative hypotheses enables members to translate theory into practice by finding principles applicable to the behavior of their own children.

The STEP program assumes that all behavior - and misbehavior - is purposive. As questions about the application of this principle arise, the leader asks members to describe:

a. What, specifically, did the child do?
b. How did you feel when this was happening?
c. How did you respond to the misbehavior?
d. How did the child respond to your reaction?
e. What purpose did the child's misbehavior have for the child?

By taking them through these steps, the leader encourages parents to look for the purposes of behavior. It is important to encourage members to feel free to guess or use hunches. In time, members can come to recognize that the freedom to risk error and to be imperfect allows them to grow by accepting their own best efforts.

__ __ 6. Focusing on the positive behavior of children and parents gives members encouragement and leads them to encourage each other.

Ask: "What do you look forward to when you are with. . .?" Or, "What can this child be respected or valued for?" Although this may be a difficult task, helping members focus on the positive will improve their relationships with their children and their feelings about themselves.

Recognize attempts by group members to function more effectively as parents. This will encourage at least minimal progress. Encouragement is a necessary skill for a parent; therefore, it should be practiced in the group. Members should learn to ask each other "What are some ways in which you can encourage your child?"

__ __ 7. Task setting and obtaining commitments is the process whereby group members are helped to clarify tasks and to specify the time commitments they are willing to make. To progress beyond general discussion, individual members must establish tasks and make definite commitments.

Task setting involves two steps: helping a parent identify a problem, and then helping him or her develop a specific

procedure for solving it. Obtain a commitment by having the parent state an intention to apply the new procedure for a week and to report results at the next meeting of the group.

The leader uses task setting and commitments to help each member focus clearly on what she or he wants to get from the study group. These procedures also align the goals of the individual with those of the group.

__ __ 8. Summarizing helps members to understand ideas, procedures, and attitudes that have been expressed and to integrate what they have learned. The summary is verbal, not written, so all may benefit from the exchange.

A summary may deal with the level of their involvement. Group members can be asked to summarize at appropriate times. The leader needn't wait until the end of the session to help clarify how he or she and other group members see the group's progress.

At the end of a session, a summary may lead group members to become aware of important things they missed during the session. This type of learning often occurs when the leader invites each member to tell what he or she learned from the session. The simple question, "What did you learn this time?" not only enables the leader to clarify mistaken impressions, it improves the leader's understanding of the group as a whole.

Specific Effective Leader Responses

__ __ 1. Silence: Silence is often an effective response. It is necessary to allow members time to think. Given such time, each member will be able to identify something learned from the experience of other members. A period of silence that seems like an eternity to the leader with "right" answers is in reality only about 30 seconds. Group members can be counted on to fill the void of silence. And their thoughtfulness will produce more learning than a dozen "right" answers.

__ __ 2. The Repeat: "You tried to use encouragement but had a hard time finding the starting place." A repeat lets members know they are heard, gives them a chance to hear themselves, and gives an opportunity for correction if the leader has perceived incorrectly.

__ __ 3. Pairing: If another member has previously reported a similar situation, "Your experience was similar to _____." or "Both you and _____ had trouble finding something to encourage." Misery does not love company but people do.

__ __ 4. Respond to Content: The "repeat" above is a content response because it paraphrases what happened. This is more comforting than a response to feeling which will be illustrated later.

__ __ 5. Expand: Given an opportunity more people will gladly tell you about their operation and in the process clarify the situation. "Can you tell us more about your Saturday morning? What did you try to do?"

The member senses a genuine interest and the desire of others to be helpful. The leader may wish to build excitement either with the member or the entire group. The same situation presents the opportunity.

__ __ 6. Action Responses: Once a basic relationship exists between the leader and the group as well as among group members, the leader may make action responses. The basic relationship means that a supportive atmosphere exists and the response will not be perceived as criticism or a put down. "What would you like to do about it?" "You've decided you're not going to put yourself in the same situation again."

__ __ 7. Feeling Responses: Like action responses, feeling responses are more personal. To identify the feeling, think first in gross terms of pain and pleasure and then narrow to the more specific feeling. "You were really pretty discouraged at not being able to get something going. Were you annoyed?" Again, a wrong answer enables you to improve your mark.

__ __ 8. Ask for an Explanation: By comparison why questions are more exciting than what, when, or where questions, but why questions demand an explanation. "Why couldn't you find one good thing that _____ was doing Saturday?" "Why did you wait until Saturday to try the encouragement?"

Compare the feeling tone generated by the above questions with the more comforting "When did you start on Saturday?" "Where were you when you tried to use encouragement?" "Who was present?" In general, "why" questions are best avoided by the discussion group leader, but on occasion they may fit in with your goals.

Objective: To assess the feasibility and planning steps in parent education program.

FEASIBILITY AND STEPS

TASK DIRECTIONS

Answer the following questions for your particular situation.

1. Are parent-study groups feasible in your school?
2. Who might be responsible for such a service?
3. What skills are required to run such a group?
4. What is the first step in initiating such a group?
5. What obstacles do you foresee for such a group?

PARTICIPANT SUMMARIES

Objective: To review the parent education overview of groups and resources.

PARENT EDUCATION GROUPS

TASK DIRECTIONS

Read this handout at your own leisure outside the workshop. It gives you a review of the material presented on parent education groups and resources.

Purpose

Society is undergoing rapid social change and recent movements toward social equality (women with men, children with adults) have presented challenges which most parents are not prepared to meet. Requests for assistance in improving interpersonal relations frequently come from parents who are frustrated in the attempts to raise children who are responsible, cooperative, and resourceful. Thus, a variety of materials have been created to aid parents in learning new methods of improving relationships with their children.

Philosophy

Requests can frequently be grouped and addressed in a study group. Such grouping is used with the assumption that the interpersonal problem grows out of a lack of information rather than illness or some psychic phenomenon. The group also assumes that there is considerable commonality in interpersonal problems and that there are resources available in the group, that group members help one another by sharing the burdens of ignorance and guilt as well as sharing ideas of alternative ways of perceiving and responding.

Physical Aspects

1. Location: The location of the meeting should be private and relatively quiet. Chairs should be comfortable; circular placement preferred (implies equal importance of all members, including the leader). Group members should be able to see each other's faces. If the room is fairly large, have the members sit in a circle closer together rather than sitting "around" the room.

2. Time: The hour of the meeting, of course, is dictated by the schedules of the potential members and of the leader. It may be most convenient for mothers who do not work outside the home to attend meetings while their children are at school.

   Evening meetings are usually more convenient for fathers and mothers employed outside the home. In some areas study groups are conducted as part of the regular adult education program in the community.

   The matter of care for preschoolers and for your school-aged children during the group meetings can be decided on by the potential members. If the meetings are held during the day at the school, the older children in the building may be allowed to assist in the care of preschoolers. If evening meetings are held, then the responsibility of providing child care can be dealt with by each individual family or by the collective group as a whole.

3. Length of a Session: The sessions should last 1½ to 2½ hours, depending on the materials being used and the schedules of the potential members and the leader.

4. Size of the Group: This depends again on what materials are being used. A group of approximately ten to twelve members will usually allow for valuable participation and involvement.

5. Refreshments: These contribute to informality and should be considered if they do not add unnecessarily to the work of the leader. Often members will share the responsibility for providing refreshments. Of course, refreshments should be only supplementary to the program and should not be used to turn the session into a social discussion.

Resource Materials

1. Books: Parents can use resource books such as Children the Challenge by Rudolf Driekurs and the leader can use the accompanying Study Group Leaders Manual by Soltz. The Soltz leader's guide presents the characteristics of a group leader, characteristics of a group, ways of getting started, the outlines for the series of sessions and key questions for each chapter. Other parent study groups use Raising a Responsibile Child by Dinkmeyer and McKay which includes a leader's outline, or The Practical Parent, ABC's of Child Discipline by Corsini and Painter. Yet another resource book that can be used for parenting groups is Gerald Patterson's Families. This book uses a programmed learning approach to teach parents about implementing behavior modification with their children.

2. Published Parenting Programs: At this writing the best structured materials for study group use in the opinion of the authors of this workshop is Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (Dinkmeyer and McKay, 1976). Patterned after the well received DUSO kit, the STEP kit contains a leader's manual, wall charts for each lesson, cassette tapes for each lesson, and a parent's handbook (text).

Objective: To review the specific components and objectives of the STEP program.

THE SYSTEMATIC TRAINING FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING (STEP) PROGRAM

TASK DIRECTION
Read this handout at your own leisure outside the workshop. It gives you a review of the STEP program material presented.

Materials: The STEP kit was created by Don Dinkmeyer and Gary D. McKay and is published by the American Guidance Services, Inc. (Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014). The entire kit costs approximately $65.00 + tax (if applicable) + shipping costs. Additional parent handbooks to be used by group members are approximately $3.50 apiece + tax (if applicable) + shipping costs.

The following materials are included in a complete STEP kit: an introductory tape giving a description of the program and an invitation to parents; invitational brochures which describe the program for prospective participants; STEP Leader's Manual; one STEP Parents' Handbook; five tape cassettes (one or two recorded segments are presented in each STEP lesson); six discussion guide cards; nine posters that are spiral bound in a self-easle; ten charts; and a vinyl carrying case that is made to double as an easel for the charts.

Leader: A STEP parent education group can be led by a person trained in the helping professions. It can also be led by a lay person who is willing to study the leader's manual intensively and has the ability to lead discussion groups.

The leader's primary task is to create a learning environment so that parents can identify basic parent-child relationship principles, discuss techniques used in resolving problem situations, and acquire a sence of usefulness in helping others. The leader does not need to be consciously aware of the intended outcome for each separate act of attending or responding to the group member. Nevertheless, the leader should have the goals of the session in mind, be aware of the leader's facilitative role in a democratic group, and be consciously aware of strategies that may achieve the learning goals for study groups.

Length: The STEP program consists of nine lessons, with a homework

activity at the end of each lesson. It is recommended that the STEP parent education group meet no more than once a week. This allows enough time to study the handbook and incorporate (by means of the homework assignments) what has been learned.

Objectives: The STEP program is based on fundamental Adlerian principles (as described by Dinkmeyer and McKay in Raising a Responsible Child) and the communication processes and skills of Thomas Gordon's Parent Effectiveness Training.

The objectives of the STEP parent study groups are:

a. To help parents understand a practical theory of human behavior and its implications for parent-child relationships.

b. To help parents learn new procedures for establishing democratic relationships with their children.

c. To help parents improve communications between themselves and their children so all concerned feel they are being heard.

d. To help parents develop skills of listening, resolving conflicts, and exploring alternatives with their children.

e. To help parents learn how to use encouragement and logical consequences to modify their children's self-defeating motives and behaviors.

f. To help parents learn how to conduct family meetings.

g. To help parents become aware of their own self-defeating patterns and faulty convictions which keep them from being effective parents who enjoy their children.

Objective: To review some specific techniques for beginning a session.

BEGINNING A MEETING

TASK DIRECTIONS
Read this handout at your own leisure outside the workshop. It gives you a review of the material presented.

Leader's Summary of Beginning a Study Group Session

The First Few Minutes:

A study group session may begin without leader intervention, usually in the form of casual conversation among members revolving around the behavior of children, experiences growing from the homework assignment, or issues growing out of reading assignments. If this occurs, there is a strong likelihood of two or more conversations occuring simultaneously and leader feeling guilty about short circuiting meaningful dialogue to initiate a "lesson that may be directly to the point. The leader can handle this dilemma by announcing "I'm really interested in the conversations that are going on. Perhaps we can all focus on (person A) and will come back to (Person B) later." If necessary, repeat the essence of content or feeling to reinitiate discussion. Some possible repeat statements: "You found that an action could have more than one goal and it was kind of hard to decide which."

Other Options:

The group may not start spontaneously. As the leader, you have several options for initiative at the beginning of a session. You may begin with homework or with the reading assignment. The homework assignment will tend to build continuity from one session to the next. It also gives members an opportunity to report success which is an encouraging experience.

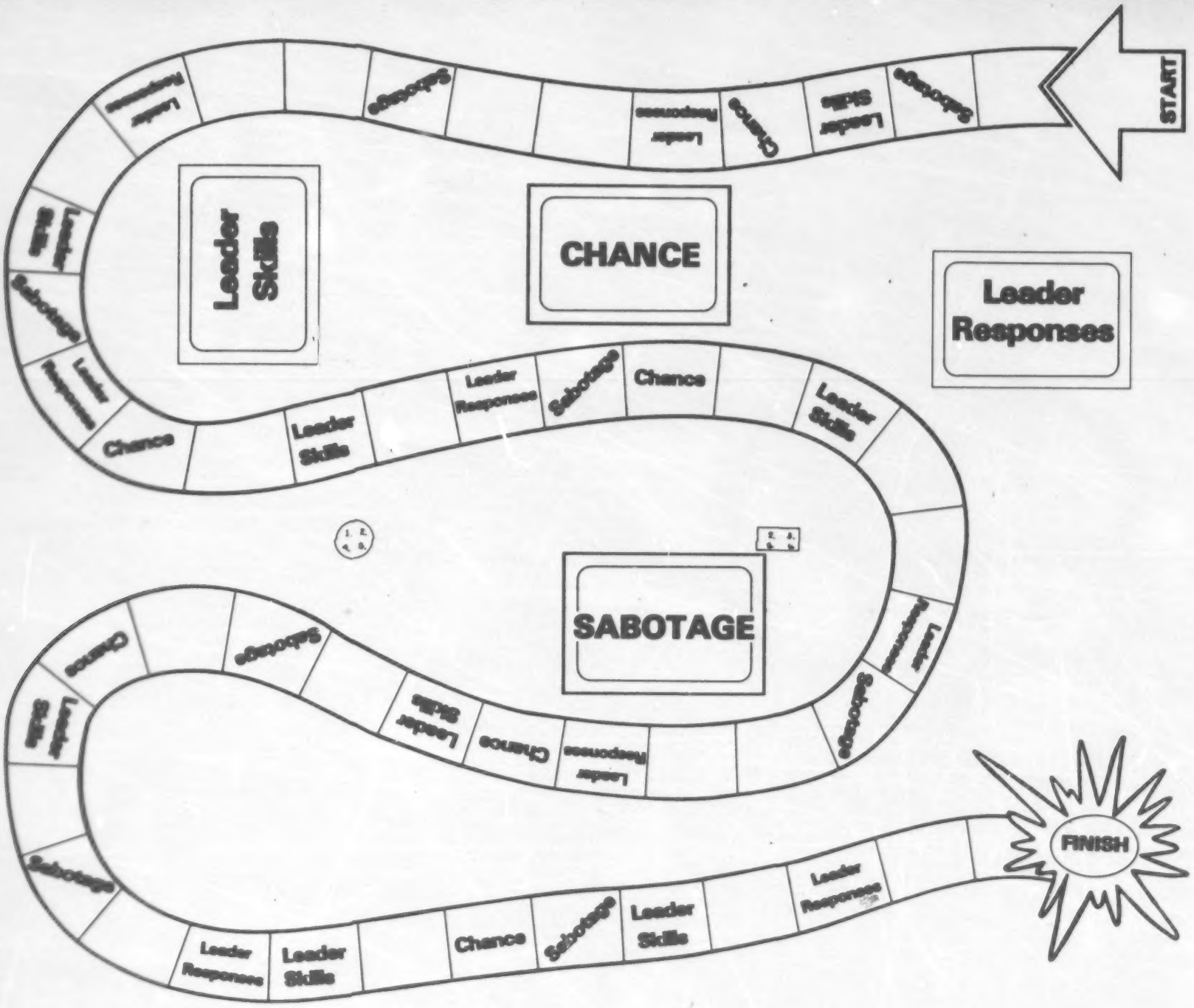
An open lead to the discussion of homework might be: "What happened when you used encouragement?" This is an open ended question and most any outcome is possible. The open question will stimulate more discussion than a closed question, one that can be answered with a yes, no or

one word explanation. A closed question carries with it implied messages of assumed incapability and guilt for a negative response. If the member reports a negative experience the leader can still be a winner by responding in terms of open ended statements of courage. "What can we learn from this?"

The pronoun "we" signals that the leader is an equal in the group and the focus of the group is on learning and mutual helpfulness.

LEADER SKILLS
GAME BOARD
AND
CARDS

Enclosed are the six pieces of the game board and the cards required to play the game in the Parent Education Groups Staff Development Package. You will need one die and to assemble the board before having your group play the game.


START
Leader Skills
Sabotage
Chance
Leader Responses
CHANCE
Leader Responses
SABOTAGE
FINISH

Leader Skills
Leader Skills
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	Chance	Sabotage	Leader Skills	

Leader Responses
Sabotage
FINISH
Leader Responses

CHANCE

CHANCE

CHANCE

Give an I-Message to someone in your group.

What is your favorite T.V. show? - Why?

Smile at the members of your group.

CHANCE

CHANCE

CHANCE

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? - Why?

What is your favorite color? - Why?

Describe the "ideal" student - use only four adjectives.

CHANCE

CHANCE

CHANCE

What have you done this past week to help someone? Tell the group about it.

What is your favorite food? - Why?

Tell someone in your group what you like about him or her.

CHANCE

CHANCE

CHANCE

Describe how you feel right at this moment.

Tell about a favorite toy you had as a child.

If you could change the world, what one thing would you change? - Why?

CHANCE

CHANCE

CHANCE

What one thing do you enjoy most about your job?

What one thing do you like least about your job?

If you could change into any animal, what would you become? - Why?

SABOTAGE

Mrs. Trass attends the parent education group alone because her husband has a meeting each night the group meets. In fact, his job often requires him to be away from home a large amount of time. When describing personal situations in the group discussions, Mrs. Trass often gets caught in the sabotage game IF ONLY HE OR SHE WOULD. She shifts the responsibility for the parent-child problems onto the absent husband. What might you say to Mrs. Trass?

SABOTAGE

After a few parent group meetings, it is apparent that Mrs. Jones enjoys being the "catastrophizer" in each session. When a new technique is being discussed, she will usually pick at it with such questions as "But what do you do when....happens?" and "But what if ..... doesn't react that way? The discussion really gets bogged down when Mrs. Jones begins her hypothetical situations. She is using the sabotage game WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN...? What could you say to Mrs. Jones?

If you said something like:

"You seem to be saying that nothing you say or do has any bearing on the relationship with your child."

or

"We are learning in this program what each individual can do, not what others should do."

or

"If we assume responsibility for our own behavior, then we are free to decide what to do about it."

ROLL AGAIN

If you said something like:

"Are you aware that when you say 'What if...?' it seems that you are looking for reasons not to change what you are presently doing?"

or

"When the child did that, what did you do?" (This forces the parent to either concentrate on specifics or to face up to the hypothetical situation)

or

"What principle did you overlook? Which principle could you have applied?"

or

"Of course anything can happén; but let's work from our own experiences."

ROLL AGAIN

SABOTAGE

Mrs. Car is enthusiastic about the parent education group. However, she seems to talk incessantly about her own home situations. She chatters through the whole meeting and you know it is inhibiting the participation of other members. She is playing the sabotage game of YAKKITY-YAK. What could you say to Mrs. Car?

SABOTAGE

When Mrs. Harris wants to contribute a personal experience to the parent group's discussion, she usually concludes her remarks with: "That Sammy really can be frustrating! I figure it's just a stage, though, and he will grow out of it eventually. This is the sabotage game called KIDS WILL DO THAT...IT'S ONLY NORMAL...IT'S JUST A STAGE. How could you respond to Mrs. Harris?

If you said something like:

"I am getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this."

or

"When you keep us busy with you, I can't help group members get involved with each other."

or

"It's hard for me to give you my undivided attention when I have so many other group members to consider and include."

ROLL AGAIN

If you said something like:

"You feel it's impossible to improve relationships, but that has not been the experience of others. We are here because we believe we can change behavior and improve our relationships with children."

or

"At times children do appear to behave in the same manner in their development, but I wonder how much of this is contributed by our behavior towards children."

or

"You seem to be saying that nothing you say or do has any bearing on the relationship with your child."

ROLL AGAIN

SABOTAGE

There are usually four major steps in trying to deal with a person who plays a consistent and disruptive sabotage game: (1) you respond by referring to the content of his statements; (2) you let the group discuss "what is happening now" or "what is really being said here"; (3) you disclose here-and-now-type feelings; and (4) you talk with the individual outside of the group setting. You have such an individual in your parent education group and you have reached step #4. What kinds of things might you say to this individual?

If you said something like:

The leader could suggest that the individual make a contribution to the group (i.e., helping someone else speak out more).

or

The leader could confront the individual about his purposes in the form of an "I-message."

or

The leader could recommend other resources where the individual might obtain additional help.

or

The leader might suggest that the individual drop out of the group.

ROLL AGAIN

SABOTAGE

Another type of sabotage game that can inhibit progress is I'LL TRY IT. Your parent education group has met several times together now. The topic of discussion tonight is "I-messages." Mrs. Lee is impressed with this type of communication and she remarks, "I like that idea. I may try it with my Sarah." How could you respond to Mrs. Lee?

SABOTAGE

Mr. Carpenter seems to enjoy playing the sabotage game HAVE YOU CONSIDERED...LET'S LOOK AT ALL POINTS OF VIEW. He has tried to read several authors' works on the subject of parenting. Several times he has interrupted the progress of the group and resisted ideas by quoting diverse authors. What could you say to Mr. Carpenter.

If you said something like:

"I feel that it's best to either change nothing or to commit yourself to following an entirely new course of action at least until the next session."

or

"It's usually best when starting a new course of action to begin with a firm resolve to proceed by a direct rule and goal in mind. Remember that your expectation of success or failure has an influence on the outcome of your actions."

ROLL AGAIN

If you said something like:

"These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them."

or

"You may have a point and I am glad you saw the relationship but we are here to consider and discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program."

or

"It's up to you to decide if these ideas and beliefs are of value to you and your situation. If you consider these ideas and beliefs are of no value to you, you might be happier and more at ease if you consider dropping from the group."

or

"We cannot tell you what to do, you must decide what is best for yourself. Our purpose is to discuss the ideas and opinions presented in the program."

or

"It seems that there are a lot of things that we can do to improve our relationships with our children."

ROLL AGAIN

SABOTAGE

Mr. Sands is quickly becoming a problem for your parent education group. He wants to be the center of attention and dominate the discussions. He is playing the sabotage game of MONOPOLY. What might you say to Mr. Sands?

SABOTAGE

This is Arthur Jensen's first attempt at leading a parent education group. He has prepared for the course well and feels relatively self-confident. During the meeting, however, many of the parents seek solutions to personal parenting problems and Mr. Jensen unwittingly falls into the trap of giving suggestions and "possible" answers. If not careful, Mr. Jensen will sabotage his entire parent education course. How is Mr. Jensen sabotaging the success of the group?

If you said something like:

I am getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this.

or

When you keep us busy with you, I can't help group members get involved with each other.

or

It's very hard for me to give you my undivided attention when I have so many group members to consider and include.

ROLL AGAIN

If you said something like:

Mr. Jensen is letting the group members look upon him as an authority on human behavior.

ROLL AGAIN

SABOTAGE

Mr. Shaw is playing the sabotage game TRY TO MAKE ME. He has taken issue with several of the techniques presented in the parent education materials because they "conflict with my authority as Sam's father - I know what's best for him and what I say, goes!" What could you say to Mr. Shaw?

SABOTAGE

Several times now Mrs. Harlow has taken issue with the ideas presented in the discussion or the parent education materials: "I'd like them to just show me how that would possibly work! My Susan never acts that way..." She is playing the sabotage game called PROVE IT. What might you say to Mrs. Harlow?

If you said something like:

These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them.

or

You may have a point and I'm glad to understand how you feel about parental responsibility, but we are here to consider and discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program.

or

It's up to you to decide if these ideas and beliefs are of value to you and your situation. If you consider these ideas and beliefs are of no value to you, you might be happier and more at ease if you consider dropping from the group.

or

You feel it's impossible to improve relationships, but that has not been the experience of others. We are here because we believe we can change bheavior and improve our relationship with children.

ROLL AGAIN

If you said something like:

I am getting concerned that time is going fast and we need to move on to other things. If there's time later, we can come back to this.

or

When you keep us busy with you, I can't help group members get involved with each other.

or

These ideas are for all of us to consider and to make our own decisions on whether or not to accept them.

or

You may have a point and I am glad that you saw that point but we are here to consider and discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program.

or

It's up to you to decide if these ideas and beliefs are of value to you and your situation. If you consider these ideas and beliefs are of no value to you, you might be happier and more at ease if you consider dropping from the group.

or

We cannot tell you what to do, you must decide what is best for yourself. Our purpose is to discuss the ideas and opinions presented in this program.

ROLL AGAIN

SABOTAGE

Why do members of parent groups play sabotage games?

SABOTAGE

As the parent education group leader, you have noticed that Mr. Lowe seems reluctant to risk saying yes or no when members ask his opinion or when the group attempts to help him develop a "plan for action." Instead of being definite, he plays the sabotage game of YES, BUT ..... How could you respond to Mr. Lowe?

If you said something like:

They have not learned to communicate honestly and directly.

or

They are being asked to change before they have new skills and attitudes to replace the sabotage games.

or

They feel unsure of themselves and use the sabotage games to defend themselves.

ROLL AGAIN

If you said something like:

When you say "Yes, but ..." it sounds as if you are talking about something you really don't want to do. That's all right. It's not the purpose of this program to pressure you to do anything you don't want to do.

or

(Addressed to the entire group) "What is Mr. Lowe really saying to us?"

ROLL AGAIN

SABOTAGE

Maude Lister has begun leading her first parent education group. This is the second meeting and a similar pattern is beginning to repeat itself: when the parents hesitate to respond to Maude or discuss the lesson, then she supplies them right away with the "answers." Ms. Lister will soon be sabotaging her entire parent education group. How is she sabotaging the success of the group?

SABOTAGE

There are ten major sabotage games that defensive parents might try to "play". Without looking at your hand-out, list and describe four of the sabotage games.

If you said something like:

She is more concerned with giving the right answer than she is with understanding and using communications skills.

ROLL AGAIN

If you described any four of the following:

1. Monopoly
2. Prove It
3. Yakkity-Yak
4. Try to Make Me
5. Have You Considered...Let's Look at All Points of View...
6. I'll Try It
7. Kids Will Do That...It's Only Normal...It's Just a Stage
8. If Only He or She Would...
9. What Do You Do When...?
10. Yes, But...

ROLL AGAIN

LEADER RESPONSES

LEADER RESPONSES

LEADER RESPONSES

This is the first meeting of the parent education group. A few of the parents have begun to share about some of their problem experiences with children. When Mr. Sells finishes, you try to get onto the topic of "parent reactions" by asking "What do you think you should do about it?" It would be better this early in the group's experiences not to give such an ACTION RESPONSE. Since support within the group has not developed yet, this type of response might be seen as a "put-down."

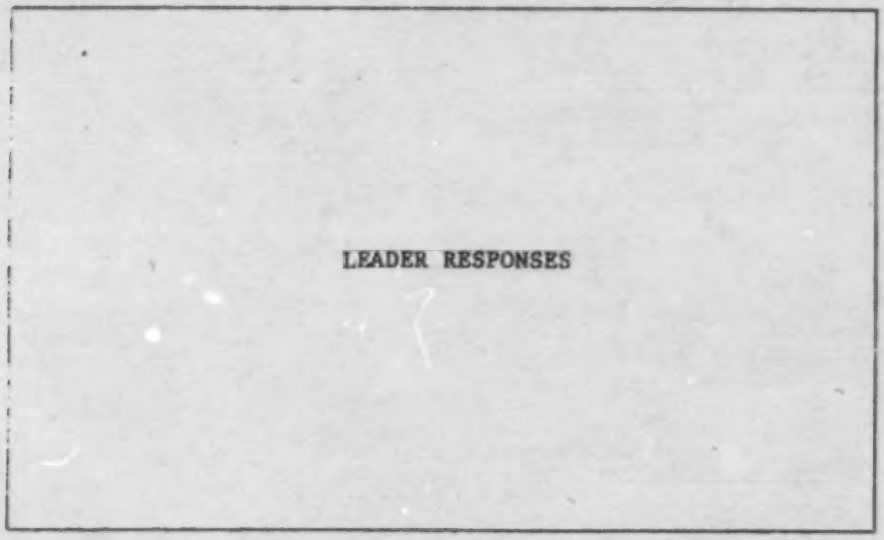
GO BACK 1 SPACE

You are leading your second parent group meeting and you still feel a bit nervous. Mr. Rogers has just described a problem he has had with his son and has asked "What should I have done?" The "right" answer seems obvious to you - yet none of the other parents volunteering a solution. So, to keep things "moving," you suggest your "right" answer. In this case, SILENCE would have been an effective response. Thirty seconds may seem like an eternity to you but it would have allowed others to get up the courage to speak out.

GO BACK 1 SPACE

It is the first parent education meeting and you are teaching the goals of misbehavior. The parents are not becoming involved in the discussion very easily. To illustrate your teaching point and to get the discussion going, you begin to describe a personal illustration of your son's attention-getting methods at yesterday's church meeting. This is a good use of CONCRETENESS in response to the tension of the group.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES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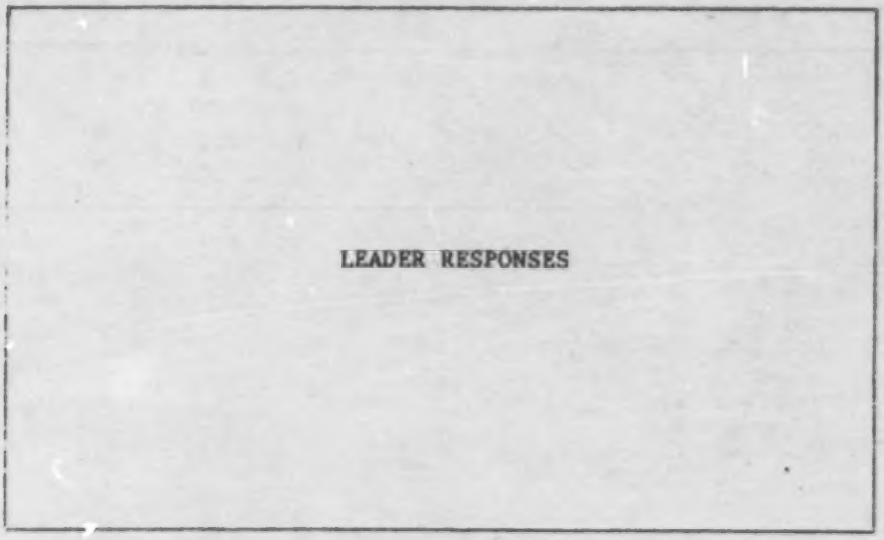
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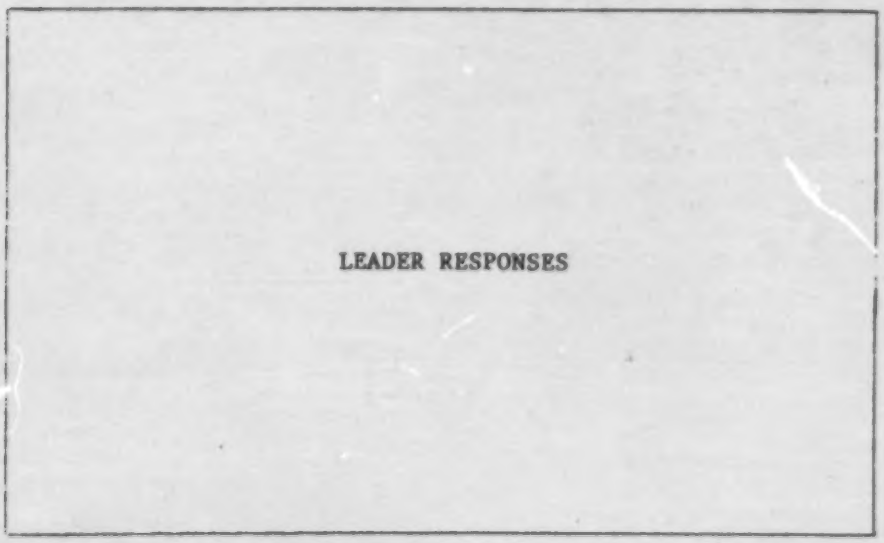

LEADER RESPONSES

This is the first parent education group meeting and the parents seem obviously ill-at-ease. You have decided that you want to establish a comfortable atmosphere for them to share in; so you direct most of your remarks about their situations to RESPONDING TO CONTENT. For example, Mrs. Castor described how her small son runs away from her in the shopping center and throws a temper tantrum when she catches up to him. You reacted with: "You would like to help your son learn better public manners, yet you aren't sure how to start?"

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE

Mrs. Lang came to the meeting noticeably upset. She explained to the members that right before she left the house, her son has shouted that she should stay home and help him with homework and that if she didn't care about him then he didn't love her either. You quietly remarked: "You must have felt hurt at his reaction to your coming to the meeting tonight." Good FEELING RESPONSE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Mrs. Wong has just posed a question about one of the theories presented in the parent education group readings. You decide to use SILENCE as a response for Mrs. Wong. After a short while, Mr. Poe - who usually has a difficult time speaking before the others - begins to explain his viewpoint concerning the theory in question. Good leader response!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

LEADER RESPONSES

LEADER RESPONSES

LEADER RESPONSES

The parents are reporting about their experiences this past week in using natural and logical consequences with their children. The Harlows have described how their Sandy was shocked when her parents did not step in and take over when she missed the bus last Tuesday. She ended up having to walk to school. Later the Smiths relate about the incident when their John missed supper because he did not come home when called - he was amazed at his parents (and angry) that he had to experience hunger until the next morning. You decide to give a PAIRING response: "Both you and the Harlows had similar experiences. Your children were astounded that they needed to suffer consequences for the decisions they made."

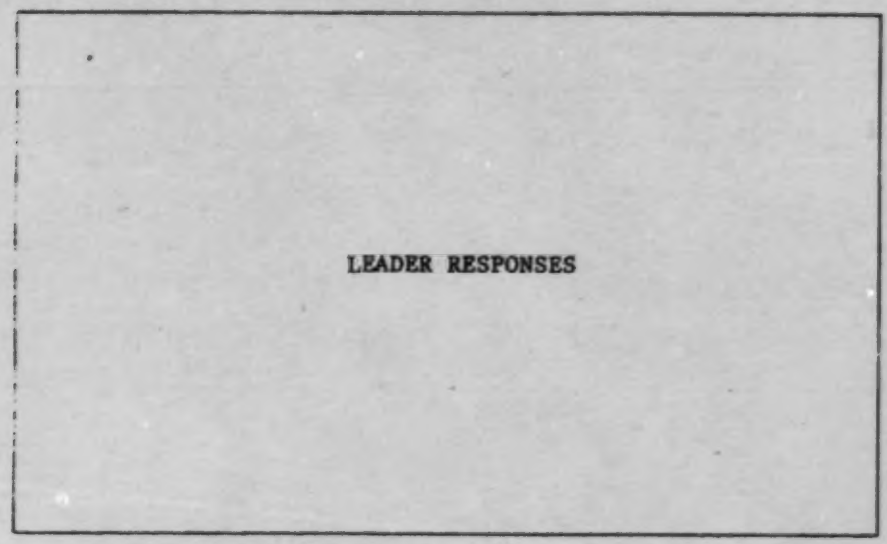
GO AHEAD 1 SPACE

The REPEAT RESPONSE: Mr. and Mrs. Howe have been reluctant to get involved in the parent group discussions. Tonight, however, they timidly tell of a problem situation they were having with their son: "We just don't know quite what to do with Randy. He's always acting up at meals and disrupting the whole family." You want them to feel understood and comfortable in sharing. So you repeat the basic content: "You would like Randy to have more responsible actions, but you're having a hard time knowing how and where to start."

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE

This is the seventh parent group meeting and the members are very interested in having an opportunity to receive help with their personal situations. However, as leader you have been giving several examples from your own experiences to teach specific points. This extensive use of CONCRETENESS responses by the leader is unwise; CONCRETENESS should be used sparingly by the leader in the later group sessions.

GO BACK 1 SPACE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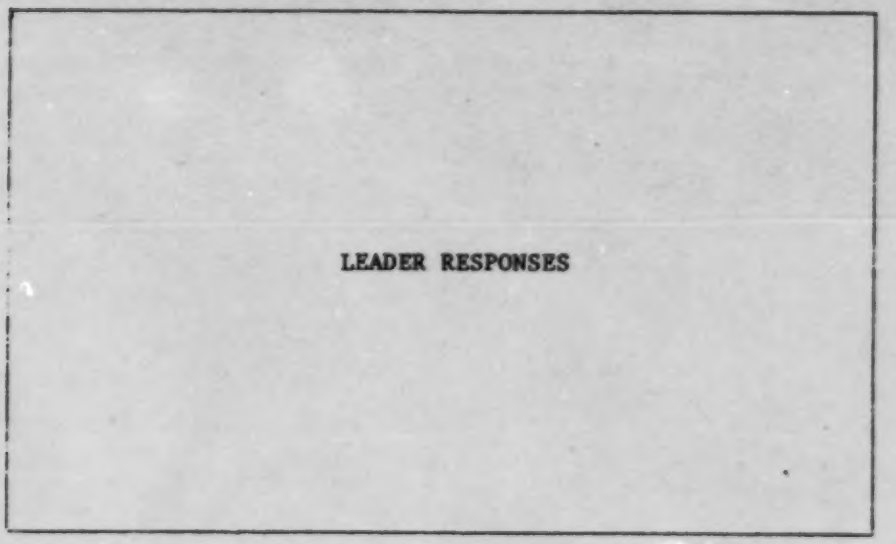
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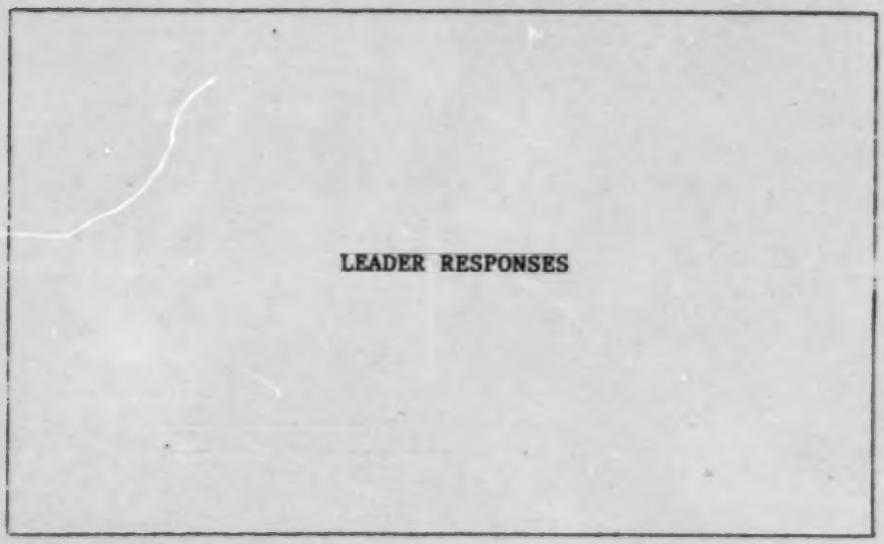

LEADER RESPONSES

Your parent education group has been meeting for quite a while now and it has become a close, supportive group. Mr. Carr has brought up a problem they are having with their daughter Lynn. You give an ACTION RESPONSE: "What would you like to do about it, Mr. Carr?" This launches Mr. Carr and the group into generating a plan on how to handle the situation.

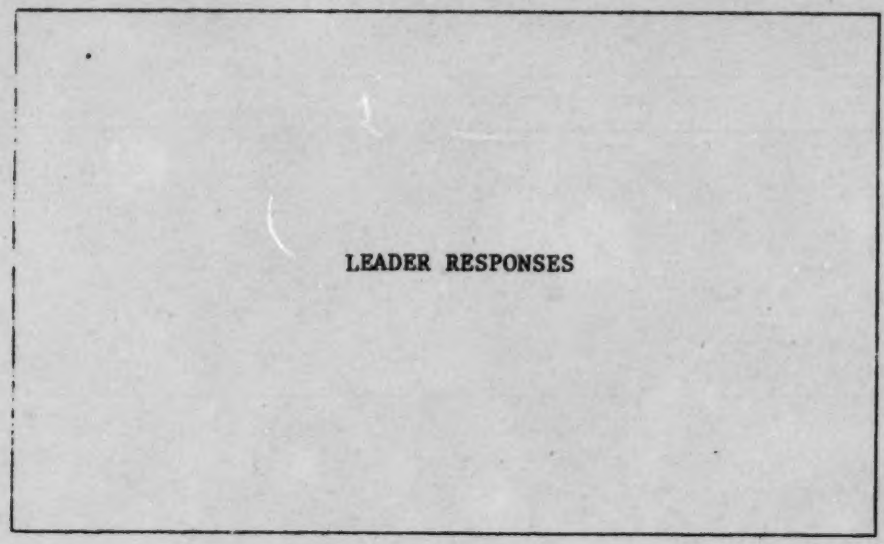
GO AHEAD 1 SPACE

Your parent education group has been meeting for several months now. The parents are discussing developing confidence in their newfound parenting techniques. Mrs. Jones describes an incident where her mother-in-law took issue with one of her parenting methods in front of her son. You remark: "You must have felt pretty frustrated and putdown about then." Good FEELING RESPONSE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Mrs. Hall is describing her son's "allergy" to homework and how she has to keep after him to get it done. You respond: "Why did you decide that homework was your responsibility and not his?" This ASK-FOR-AN-EXPLANATION-RESPONSE (the why-question) is usually to be avoided by the group leader. It is often too confrontive for the parent. Rarely - in extreme cases - would this type of response fit in with your goals.

GO BACK 1 SPACE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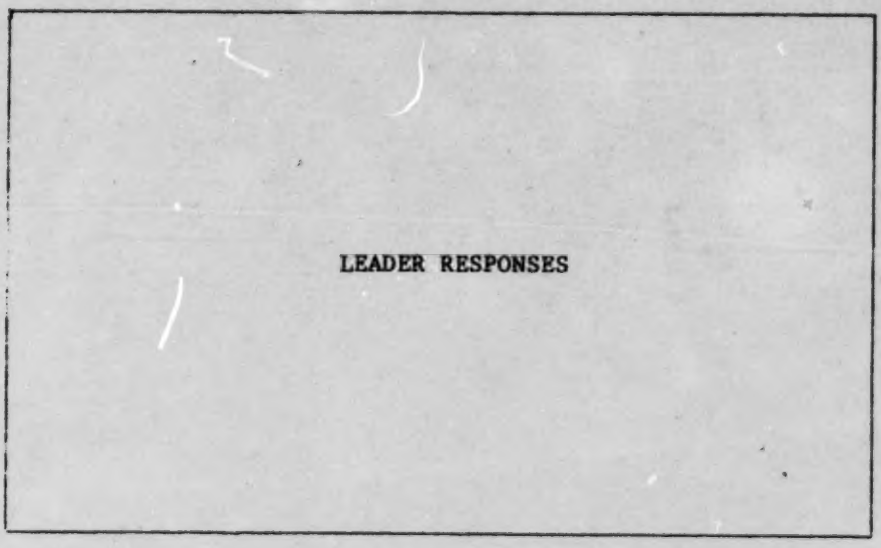
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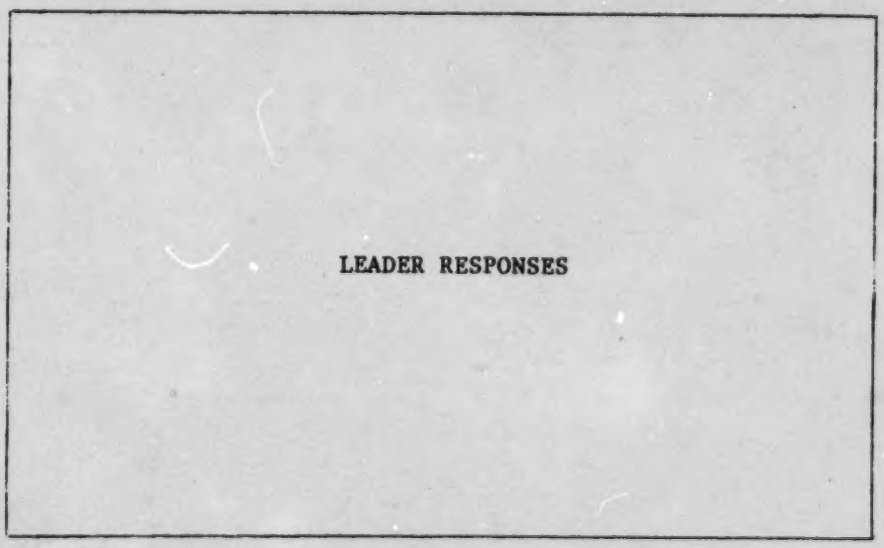

LEADER RESPONSES

Ever since the parent group began meeting, Mr. Roberts has been reluctant to speak out or describe his family situations. Tonight at the meeting he is quietly relating how his son refused to help with the family chores. You are excited about Mr. Robert's contribution, so you ask him more - "How did he refuse? What did you do then?" It would probably be better <u>not</u> to use the EXPAND-RESPONSE here. (Mr. Roberts could feel pressured) - a response relating just to the content would build more comfort in his situation.

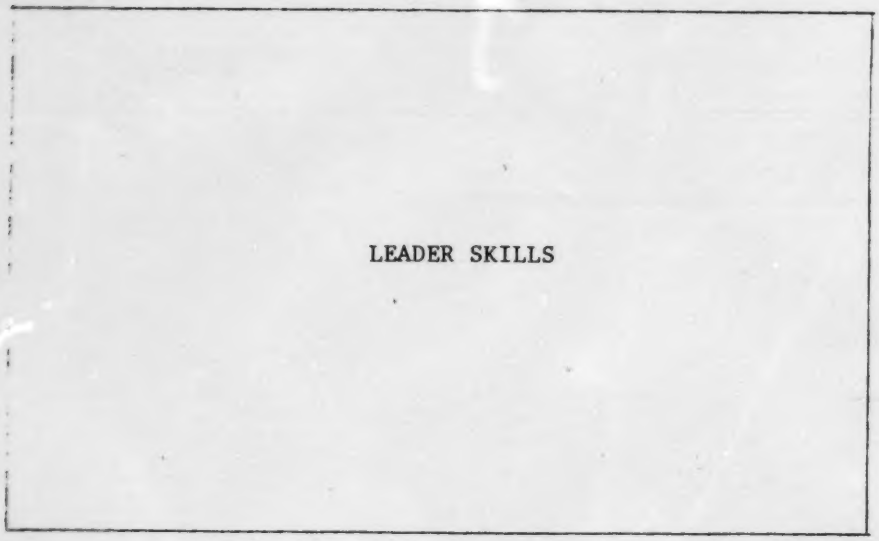
GO BACK 1 SPACE

Mrs. Walker is trying to enlist the help of the group members in learning how to change her daughter's extreme attention-getting behavior while Mrs. Walker is on the telephone. The group has met several times together now and you would like to build a little more excitement in the group. So you ask Mrs. Walker: "Tell us more about what your daughter is doing. What do you do while she is acting this way?" Good use of an EXPAND-RESPONSE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Mrs. Garcia is attempting to describe her Anna's ability to disrupt the entire household at bedtime. You respond: "I remember from last week that Mr. Lee was describing a similar problem. Both of you seem to be having trouble finding a way to get your children to cooperate at bedtime." This was a good <u>PAIRING</u> response for you to make.

GO AHEAD 1 SPACE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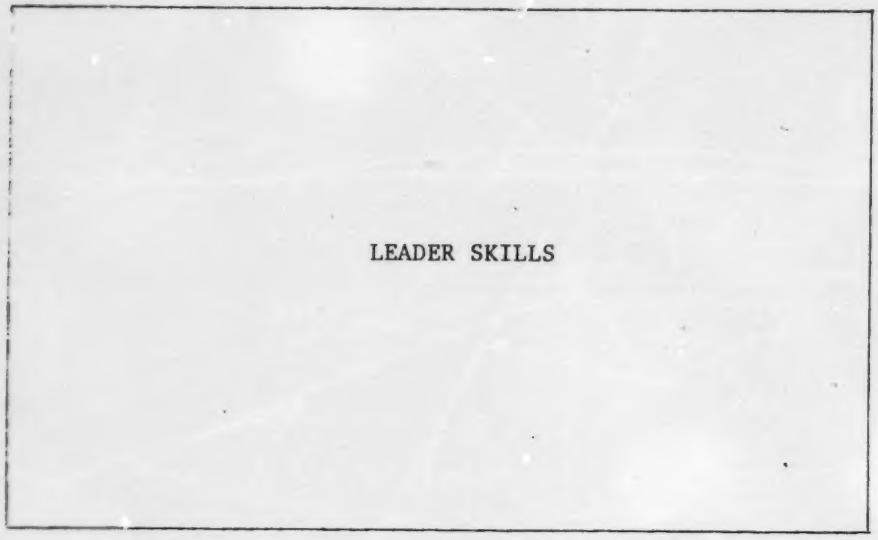
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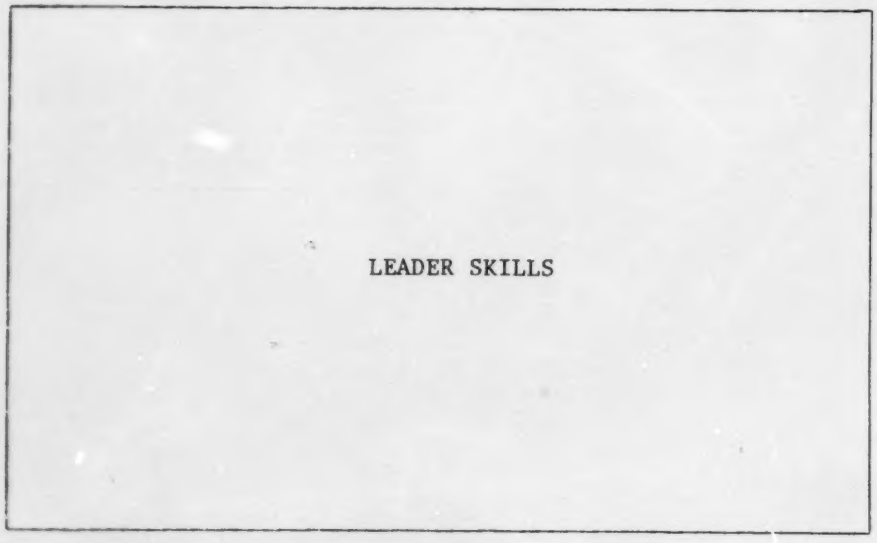

LEADER SKILLS

Your parent education group has been meeting for several weeks now and the enthusiasm and involvement are showing a definite increase. As leader, you have established the pattern of a weekly homework assignment (to apply techniques learned during the meeting) and the parents report about their experiences at the following meeting. Good TASK SETTING AND OBTAINING COMMITMENTS!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

Mr. Fox often complains in the parent group about his son's lack of responsibility-taking at home. Yet, when you try to get him to pinpoint specific situations and apply the theories he has learned, he simply replies, "I'll try" (without any real enthusiasm). You feel discouraged because you know that TASK SETTING AND OBTAINING COMMITMENTS are important parts of the learning process.

GO BACK 1 SPACE

The parent education group is discussing children's responsibilities as they relate to school and getting homework accomplished. A few of the members begin to maneuver the discussion into a verbal attack on various teachers' methods and requirements. As leader, however, you bring the conversation back to pinpointing what are the school responsibilities of children. Good STRUCTURING!

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

LEADER SKILLS

LEADER SKILLS

LEADER SKILLS

Mrs. Smith excitedly reports to your parent group tonight about how she successfully handled her daughter's bid for negative attention during the past week. You have helped her in DEVELOPING TENTATIVE HYPOTHESES and in risking applying those hypothesis.

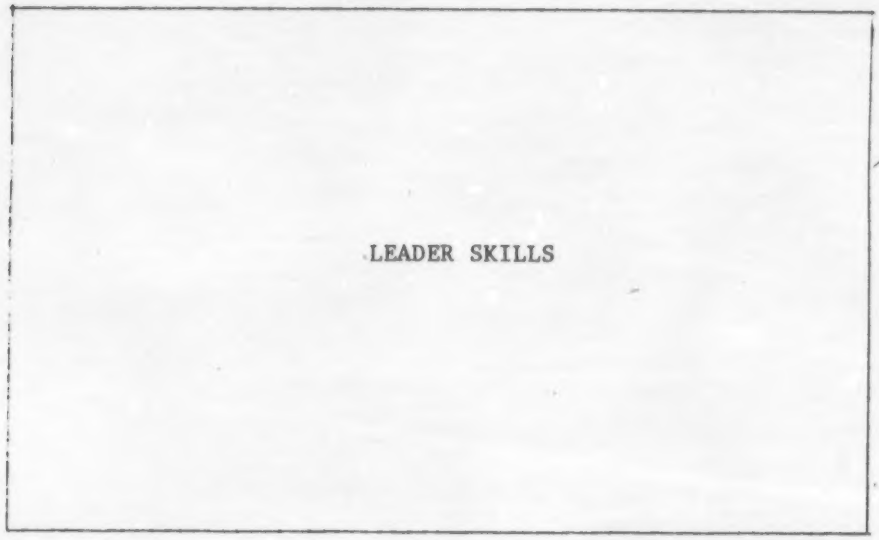
GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

The assignment tonight for the parents in your group is to describe what they like about their children - what actions they can encourage. As the leader, you know how important it is to try FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVE.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

It is the second parent group meeting and Mrs. Ross is expressing a concern about her daughter's taking care of her own clothes. As the leader, you turn to the group and ask, "Has anyone else wondered or been concerned about that?" Other group members identify with the situation and begin to respond. Good UNIVERSALIZING!

GO AHEAD 3 SPACES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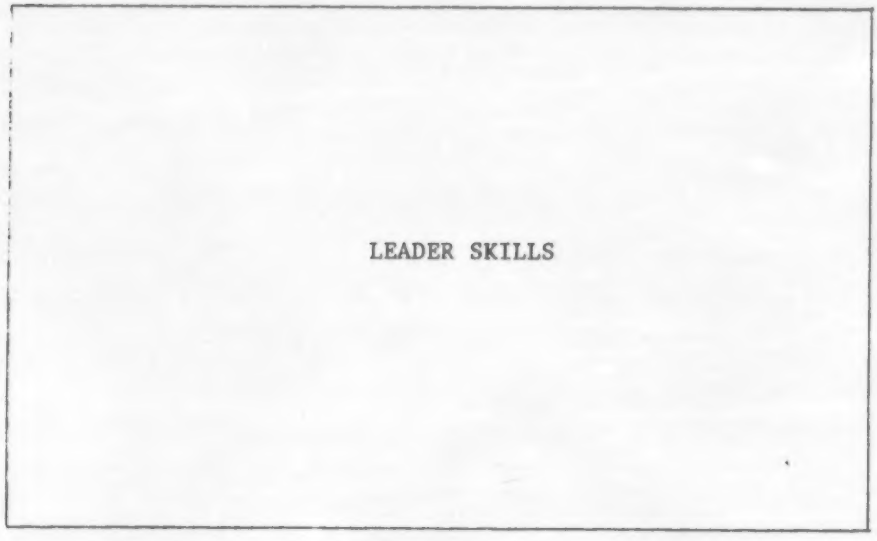

LEADER SKILLS

LEADER SKILLS

Mrs. Lang is concluding an emotional description of how her Jackie has been so pokey in the mornings and she has had to drive him to school for the past four days. All she receives is sympathetic (or embarrassed) mumblings. What this woman needs is FEEDBACK from the leader and other group members!

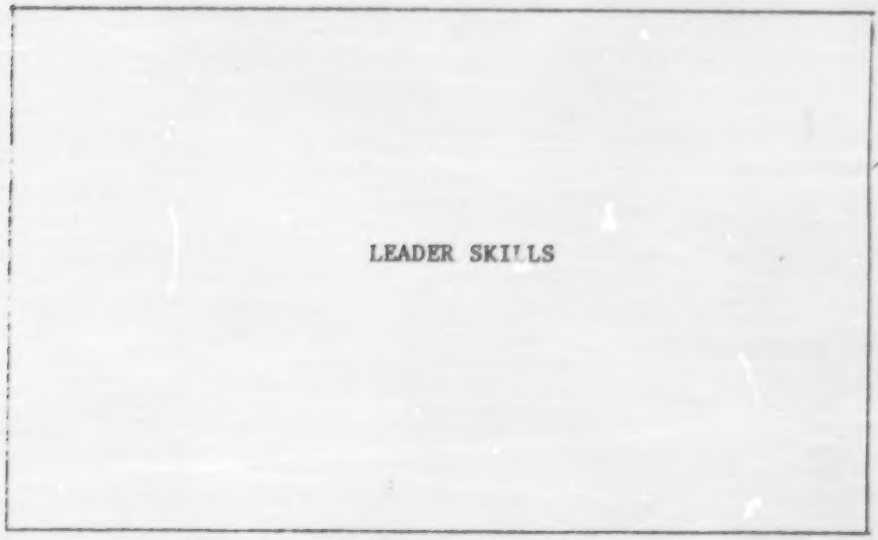
GO BACK 3 SPACES

Mr. Gomez is expressing frustration and annoyance about his five-year-old's consistent bid for attention. As the leader, you know that LINKING clarifies communication and is especially helpful in the early stages of the group - so you remark: "Last week didn't you express a similar problem of feeling irritated at your daughter's attention-getting methods, Mr. Rogers?"

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

You and the parent education group you are leading are in the middle of the second meeting. The discussion seems to be floundering. Various members seem to want to skirt the subject instead of talking about the real issue at hand. You stop the discussion for a minute and ask such questions as: "What is happening to our group, how are you feeling right now, what are we wanting to accomplish during this session?" Good use of SUMMARIZING.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES


LEADER SKILLS

LEADER SKILLS

LEADER SKILLS

Mr. John is describing how he attempted to respond to his children's fighting: he went to his room to read; however, when they followed him with their fighting, he ended up spanking them both. All you are able to concentrate on is his adding to a power struggle with punishment. As the leader, you should encourage him (he did remove himself from the situation as a first step) and try FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVE.

GO BACK 2 SPACES

Mr. Poe came to the third parent group meeting eager to bring up his problem about Roger, his son: "I just can't get him to cooperate. Why is he like this?" To get Mr. Poe to begin to apply newly learned theories to a specific situation, you lead him through a series of questions: what specifically happened, how did it make you feel, what did you do, what happened, and so on. You are helping Mr. Poe in DEVELOPING TENTATIVE HYPOTHESES.

GO AHEAD 2 SPACES

The third meeting of your parent education group is over and two of the parents have come up to you and expressed dissatisfaction with the progress of the group. You have also been concerned about the group's involvement. You leave the meeting frustrated and a bit discouraged. SUMMARIZING during the meeting would have helped to clarify feelings and mistaken impressions.

GO BACK 1 SPACE

LEADER SKILLS

LEADER SKILLS

LEADER SKILLS

It is the first meeting of the parent education group and you are attempting to keep the discussion centered around "communication." However, Mrs. Car and Mrs. Lloyd are in the corner critisizing the school system; Mr. Lister, Mr. Car, and Mrs. Jay are discussing communication among themselves; and the rest of the members look bored. This meeting needs STRUCTURING.

GO BACK 3 SPACES

Susan Lee is relating to the parent group about a situation she had to resolve with her son Michael. The result of the conflict left some questions in her mind about punishment. Immediately two other parents respond to her question with such comments as "That idea has been bothering me too" and "I had a similar experience with my Harry." They are UNIVERSALIZING themselves because of the pattern you established earlier in the group.

GO AHEAD 3 SPACES

The parent group members are verbally listing things they would like to see changed in their children. Mrs. Hall emphatically states that she is "sick and tired of constantly picking up Maggie's clothes from all over the house." Mrs. Day quietly remarks, "It sounds to me like your Maggie has discovered a good way of really getting you involved with her." You've done a good job teaching the members how to give FEEDBACK!

GO AHEAD 3 SPACES